EMILIUS

AND

SOPHIA.

VOL. III.

EMILIUS and SOPHIA:

F. ELIOTT PRATT

OR,

A NEW SYSTEM OF EDUCATION.

Tranſlated from the FRENCH of

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BY

The TRANSLATOR of ELOISA.

VOL. III.

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EMILIUS;

OR,

A NEW SYSTEM OF EDUCATION.

ALCOTT PRATT

Continuation of BOOK IV.

"ABOUT thirty years ago, a young man, who had forſaken his own country, and rambled into Italy, found himſelf reduced to circumſtances of great poverty and diſtreſs. He had been bred a Calviniſt: but, in conſequence of his miſconduct and of being unhappily a fugitive in a foreign country without money or friends, he was induced to change his religion for the ſake of ſubſiſtence. To this end he procured admittance into an houſe, eſtabliſhed for the

" reception of proſelytes. Here, the inſtruc-
" tions he received concerning ſome contro-
" verſial points, excited doubts he had not
" before entertained, and brought him firſt
" acquainted with the evil of the ſtep he had
" taken. He was taught ſtrange dogmas, and
" was eye-witneſs to ſtranger manners; and
" to theſe he ſaw himſelf a deſtined victim.
" He now attempted to make his eſcape, but
" was prevented, and more cloſely confined;
" if he complained, he was puniſhed for com-
" plaining; and, lying at the mercy of his
" tyrannical oppreſſors, found himſelf treated
" as criminal, becauſe he could not without
" reluctance ſubmit to be ſo. Let thoſe, who
" are ſenſible how much the firſt act of vio-
" lence and injuſtice irritate young and unex-
" perienced minds, judge of the ſituation of
" this unfortunate youth. Swoln with indig-
" nation, the tears of rage burſt from his eyes.
" He implored the aſſiſtance of heaven and
" earth in vain; he appealed to the whole
" world, but nobody attended to his plea.
" His complaints could reach the ears only of
" a parcel of vile domeſtics, ſlaves to the
" wretch by whom he was thus treated, or
" accomplices in the ſame crime; who ridi-
" culed his nonconformity and endeavoured to
" excite his imitation. He had been doubtleſs

" entirely

" entirely ruined, had it not been for the " good offices of an honeſt eccleſiaſtic, who " came to the hoſpital on ſome buſineſs, and " with whom he found an opportunity of a " private conference. The good prieſt was " himſelf poor, and ſtood in need of every " one's aſſiſtance; the oppreſſed proſelyte, " however, ſtood yet in greater need of him: " the former did not heſitate therefore to fa- " vour his eſcape, at the riſk of making " himſelf a powerful enemy.

" Having eſcaped from vice only to return " to indigence, this young adventurer ſtruggled " without ſucceſs againſt his deſtiny: For a " moment, indeed, he thought himſelf above " it, and at the firſt proſpect of good-fortune, " his former diſtreſſes and his protector were " forgotten together. He was ſoon puniſhed, " however, for his ingratitude, as his ground- " leſs hopes ſoon vaniſhed: his youth ſtood in " vain on his ſide; his romantic notions proving " deſtructive to all his deſigns. Having nei- " ther capacity nor addreſs, to ſurmount the " difficulties that fell in his way; ſtranger to " the virtues of moderation and the arts of " knavery, he attempted ſo many things that " he could bring none to perfection. Hence, " fallen into his former diſtreſs, in want of

" food and lodging, and ready to periſh with " hunger, he recollected his benefactor.

" To him he returned, and was well re- " ceived; the ſight of the unhappy youth " brought to the poor vicar's mind the remem- " brance of a good action: a remembrance " always grateful to an honeſt mind. This " good prieſt was naturally humane and com- " paſſionate, his own misfortunes had taught " him to feel for thoſe of others, nor had pro- " ſperity hardened his heart; in a word, the " maxims of true wiſdom and conſcious virtue, " had confirmed the goodneſs of his natural " diſpoſition. He cordially embraced the young " wanderer, provided him a lodging, and ſha- " red with him the ſlender means of his own " ſubſiſtence. Nor was this all: he went ſtill " farther, giving him both inſtruction and con- " ſolation, in order to teach him that difficult " art of ſupporting adverſity with patience. " Could you believe, ye ſons of prejudice! that " a prieſt, and a prieſt in Italy too, could be " capable of this?

" This honeſt eccleſiaſtic was a poor Savoy- " ard, who, having in his younger days, incur- " red the diſpleaſure of his biſhop was obliged " to paſs the mountains, in order to ſeek that

" proviſion

" proviſion which was denied him in his own
" country. He was neither deficient in lite-
" rature nor underſtanding, his talents, there-
" fore, together with an engaging appearance,
" ſoon procured him protectors, who recom-
" mended him to be tutor to a young man of
" quality. He preferred poverty, however, to
" dependence; and, being a ſtranger to the
" manners and behaviour of the great, he re-
" mained but a ſhort time in that ſituation.
" In quitting this ſervice, nevertheleſs, he did
" not loſe the eſteem of his patron; and, as he
" behaved with great prudence, and was uni-
" verſally beloved, he flattered himſelf he
" ſhould in time regain the good opinion of his
" biſhop, and obtain ſome little benefice in the
" mountains, where he hoped to ſpend the reſt
" of his days. This was the height of his
" ambition.

" Intereſted, by a natural propenſity, in fa-
" vour of the young fugitive; he examined
" very carefully into his character and diſpo-
" ſition. In this examination, he ſaw that his
" misfortunes had already debaſed his heart;
" that the ſhame and contempt to which he had
" been expoſed, had depreſſed his courage, and
" that his diſappointed pride, converted into in-
" dignation, deduced from the injuſtice and cru-

" elty of mankind, the depravity of human na-
" ture and the emptineſs of virtue. He had ob-
" ſerved religion made uſe of as a maſk to ſelf-
" intereſt, and its worſhip as a cloak to hypo-
" criſy. He had ſeen the terms heaven and
" hell proſtituted in the ſubtilty of vain diſ-
" putes; the joys of the one and pains of the
" other being annexed to a mere repetition of
" words. He had obſerved the ſublime and
" primitive idea of the Divinity disfigured by
" the fantaſtical imaginations of men; and,
" finding that, in order to believe in God, it
" was neceſſary to give up that underſtanding
" he hath beſtowed on us, he held in the ſame
" diſdain as well the ſacred object of our idle
" reveries as thoſe reveries themſelves. With-
" out knowing any thing of natural cauſes, or
" giving himſelf any trouble to think about them,
" he had plunged himſelf into the moſt ſtupid
" ignorance, mixed with the moſt profound
" contempt for thoſe who pretended to know
" more than himſelf.

" A neglect of all religious duties, leads to a
" neglect of all moral obligations. The heart
" of this young libertine had already made a
" great progreſs from one toward the other.
" Not that he was conſtitutionally vicious;
" but, incredulity and misfortune, having ſti-

" fled

" fled by degrees, the propenſities of his na-
" tural diſpoſition, they were hurrying him on
" to ruin; adding to the manners of the beg-
" gar, the principles of the Atheiſt.

" His ruin, however, tho' almoſt inevitable,
" was not abſolutely compleated. His educa-
" tion not having been neglected, he was not
" without knowledge. He had not as yet ex-
" ceeded that happy term of life, wherein the
" fermenting blood ſerves to invigorate the
" mind without enflaming the paſſions. His
" were as yet unrelaxed and unexcited. A
" natural modeſty and timidity of diſpoſition
" had hitherto ſupplied the place of reſtraint;
" and had prolonged that term in which you
" endeavour ſo long to preſerve your pupil.
" The odious example of brutal depravity,
" and of vices without temptation, ſo far from
" animating his imagination, had mortified it.
" Diſguſt had long ſupplied the place of virtue,
" in the preſervation of his innocence; to cor-
" rupt this, required more powerful ſeduc-
" tions.

" The good prieſt ſaw the danger and the
" remedy. The difficulties which appeared in
" the application did not deter him from the
" attempt: he took a pleaſure in his deſign,

" and reſolved to compleat it; by reſtoring to
" virtue the victim he had ſnatched from infa-
" my."

" To this end he ſet out at a diſtance, in the
" execution of his project; the merit of the
" motive increaſed his hopes, and inſpired means
" worthy of his zeal. Whatever might be the
" ſucceſs, he was certain he ſhould not throw
" away his labour: we are always ſure ſo far
" to ſucceed in well doing."

" He began with ſtriving to gain the confi-
" dence of the proſelyte, by conferring on him
" his favours diſintereſtedly; by never impor-
" tuning him with exhortations, and by de-
" ſcending always to a level with his ideas
" and manner of thinking. It muſt have
" been an affecting ſight to ſee a grave di-
" vine become the comrade of a young liber-
" tine; to ſee virtue affect the air of licentiouſ-
" neſs, in order to triumph the more certainly
" over it. Whenever the heedleſs youth made
" him the confident of his follies and unbo-
" ſomed himſelf freely to his benefactor, the
" good prieſt liſtened attentively to his ſtories,
" and without approving the evil, intereſted him-
" ſelf in the conſequences. No ill-timed cenſure
" ever indiſcreetly checked his communicative
" temper.

"temper. The pleaſure with which he thought
"himſelf heard, increaſed that which he took
"in telling all his ſecrets. Thus he was in-
"duced to make a free and general confeſſion
"without thinking of his confeſſing any thing."

"Having thus made himſelf maſter of his
"ſentiments and character, the prieſt was en-
"abled to ſee clearly that, without being igno-
"rant for his years, he had forgot every thing
"of conſequence for him to know, and that
"the ſtate of meanneſs into which he was re-
"duced, had almoſt ſtifled in him the ſenſe of
"good and evil. There is a degree of low
"ſtupidity, which deprives the ſoul as it were
"of life; the voice of conſcience alſo is little
"heard by thoſe who think of nothing but the
"means of ſubſiſtence. To reſcue the unfor-
"tunate youth from the moral death that ſo nearly
"threatened him, he began therefore by awaken-
"ing his ſelf-love and exciting in him a due regard
"to himſelf. He repreſented to his imagination
"a more happy ſucceſs, from the future employ-
"ment of his talents: he animated him with a
"generous ardour, by a recital of the commend-
"able actions of others; and by raiſing his ad-
"miration of thoſe who performed them, ex-
"cited in him a ſpirit of emulation, and a de-
"ſire of imitating them. In order to detach

" him insensibly from an idle and vagabond " life, he employed him in copying extracts " from books; and under pretence of having " occasion for such extracts, cherished in him " the noble sentiment of gratitude to his bene- " factor. By this method, also he instructed " him indirectly by the books he employed him " to copy; and induced him to recover so good " an opinion of himself as to think he was not " quite good for nothing, and to hold himself " not so despicable in his own esteem."

" A trifling circumstance may serve to shew " the art, which this benevolent instructor made " use of insensibly to elevate the heart of his dis- " ciple, without appearing to think of giving " him instruction. This good ecclesiastic was " so well known and esteemed for his probity " and discernment, that many persons chose ra- " ther to entrust him with the distribution of " their alms than the richer clergy of the ci- " ties. Now it happened, that receiving one " day a sum of money in charge for the poor; " the young man had the meanness to desire " some of it, under that title, for himself. No, " replied his benefactor, you and I are brethren; " you belong to me, and I ought not to ap- " ply the charity deposited with me to my own " use. He then gave him the sum he wanted

" out

"out of his own pocket. Leſſons of this "kind are hardly ever thrown away on young "people, whoſe hearts are not entirely cor-"rupted."

"But I will continue to ſpeak no longer in "the third perſon, which is indeed a ſuperflu-"ous caution; as you are very ſenſible my "dear countryman, that the unhappy fugitive "I have been ſpeaking of is myſelf. I con-"ceive myſelf far enough removed from the ir-"regularities of my youth to dare to avow "them; and think the hand which extricated "me from them, too well deſerving my gra-"titude, for me not to do it honour, at the "expence of a little ſhame."

"The moſt ſtriking circumſtance of all was "to obſerve, in the retired life of my worthy "maſter, virtue without hypocriſy, humanity "without weakneſs, his converſation always "honeſt and ſimple, and his conduct ever con-"formable to his diſcourſe. I never found "him troubling himſelf whether the perſons, "he aſſiſted went conſtantly to veſpers; whe-"ther they went frequently to confeſſion, or faſt-"ed on certain days of the week: nor did I "ever know him impoſe on them any of thoſe "conditions, without which a man might pe-

"riſh

" riſh for want, and have no hopes of relief " from the devout."

" Encouraged by theſe obſervations, ſo far was " I from affecting, in his preſence, the forward " zeal of a new proſelyte, that I took no pains " to conceal my thoughts, nor did I ever remark " his being ſcandalized at this freedom. Hence " have I ſometimes ſaid to myſelf, he certainly " overlooks my indifference for the new mode " of worſhip I have embraced, in conſideration " of the diſregard which he ſees I have for that " in which I was educated; as he finds my in- " difference is not partial to either. But what " could I think when I heard him ſometimes " approve dogmas contrary to thoſe of the Ro- " man church, and appear to hold its ceremo- " nies in little eſteem? I ſhould have been apt " to conclude him a proteſtant in diſguiſe, had " I ſeen him leſs obſervant of thoſe very ce- " remonies which he ſeemed to think of ſo lit- " tle account; but, knowing that he acquitted " himſelf as punctually of his duties as a prieſt, " in private as in public, I knew not how to " judge of theſe ſeeming contradictions. If " we except the failing, which firſt brought " him into diſgrace with his ſuperior, and of " which he was not altogether corrected, his " life was exemplary, his manners irreproach- " able,

"able, and his converſation prudent and ſenſi-
"ble. As I lived with him in the greateſt in-
"timacy, I learned every day to reſpect him
"more and more; and as he had entirely won
"my heart by ſo many acts of kindneſs, I wait-
"ed with an impatient curioſity, to know the
"principles on which a life and conduct ſo ſin-
"gular and uniform could be founded."

"It was ſome time however, before this cu-
"rioſity was ſatisfied. Before he would diſcloſe
"himſelf to his diſciple, he endeavoured to cul-
"tivate thoſe ſeeds of reaſon and goodneſs,
"which he had ſown in his mind. The great-
"eſt difficulty he met with, was to eradicate
"from my heart a proud miſanthropy, a cer-
"tain rancorous hatred which I bore to the
"wealthy and fortunate, as if they were made
"ſuch at my expence, and had uſurped apparent
"happineſs from what ſhould have been really
"mine. The idle vanity of youth, which is
"oppoſed to all kind of humiliation, encou-
"raged but too much my propenſity to indulge
"this ſplenetic humour; while that ſelf-love
"which my Mentor ſtrove ſo much to cheriſh,
"increaſing my pride, rendered mankind ſtill
"more deteſtable, and only added to my ha-
"tred of them, the moſt egregious contempt."

"With-

"Without directly attacking this pride, he "contented himself to prevent its degenerating "into barbarity, and without diminishing my- "self-esteem, made me less disdainful of my "neighbours. In withdrawing the gaudy veil "of external appearances, and presenting to my "view the real evils it covered, he taught me "to lament the failings of my fellow-creatures, "to sympathize with their miseries, and to pity "instead of envying them. Moved to compas- "sion for human frailties, from a deep sense of "his own, he saw mankind every where the "victims either of their own vices or of those "of others: he saw the poor groan beneath the "yoke of the rich, and the rich beneath that "of their own prepossessions and prejudices. "Believe me said he, our mistaken notions of "things, are so far from concealing our mis- "fortunes from our view, that they augment "those evils, by rendering trifles of importance, "and making us sensible of a thousand wants, "which we should never have known but from "our prejudices. Peace of mind consists in a "contempt for every thing that may disturb it. "The man who gives himself the greatest con- "cern about life, is he who enjoys it least; and "he who aspires the most earnestly after hap- "piness is always the most miserable."

"Alas!

"Alas! cried I, with all the bitterneſs of "diſcontent, what a deplorable picture do you "preſent of human life! If we may indulge "ourſelves in nothing, to what purpoſe are "we born? if we muſt deſpiſe even happineſs "itſelf, who is there can know what it is to be "happy?" "I know," "replied, the good "prieſt, in a tone and manner that ſtruck "me. You! ſaid I, ſo little favoured by for-"tune! ſo poor! exiled! perſecuted! can you "be happy? And, if you are, what have you "done to purchaſe happineſs? My dear child, "returned he, I will very readily tell you. As "you have freely confeſſed to me, I will do the "ſame to you. I will diſcloſe to you, ſaid he, "embracing me, all the ſentiments of my "heart. You ſhall ſee me, if not ſuch as I "really am, at leaſt ſuch as I think myſelf to "be: and when you have heard my whole "profeſſion of faith, when you know fully the "ſituation of my heart, you will know why "I think myſelf happy; and, if you think as I "do, what you have to do to become ſo like-"wiſe. But this profeſſion is not to be made in "a moment: it will require ſome time to diſ-"cloſe to you my thoughts on the ſituation of "man, and the real value of human life;—we "will take a proper opportunity for an hour's "uninterrupted converſation on this ſubject.

"As

" As I expreſſed an earneſt deſire for ſuch an " opportunity, it was put off only to the next " morning. It was in ſummer time, and we " roſe at break of day; when, taking me out " of town, he led me to the top of a hill, at " the foot of which ran the river Po, watering " the fertile vales. That immenſe chain of " mountains, the Alps, terminated the diſtant " proſpect. The riſing ſun had caſt its orient " rays over the gilded plains, and, by projec- " ting the long ſhadows of the trees, the " houſes and adjacent hills, deſcribed the moſt " beautiful ſcene ever mortal eye beheld. One " might have been tempted to think that na- " ture had at this time diſplayed all its magni- " ficence, as a ſubject for our converſation. " Here it was that, after contemplating for a " ſhort time the ſurrounding objects in ſilence, " my guide and benefactor thus began,

The PROFESSION *of* FAITH *of a Savoyard Curate.*

Expect not either learned declamations or profound arguments; I am no great philoſopher, and I give myſelf little trouble whether I ever ſhall be ſuch, or not. But I perceive ſometimes the glimmering of good-ſenſe, and have always a regard for the truth. I will not enter into any

diſ-

diſputation, or endeavour to refute you; but only lay down my own ſentiments in ſimplicity of heart: conſult your own, during this expoſition; this is all I require of you. If I am miſtaken, it is undeſignedly: which is ſufficient to clear me of all criminal error; and if you are in like manner unwittingly deceived, it is of little conſequence: if I am right, reaſon is common to both; we are equally intereſted in liſtening to it: and why ſhould you not think as I do?

I was born a poor peaſant, deſtined by my ſituation to the buſineſs of huſbandry; it was thought, however, much more adviſeable for me to learn to get my bread by the profeſſion of a prieſt; and means were found to give me a proper education. In this, moſt certainly, neither my parents nor I conſulted what was really good, true, or uſeful for me to know; but only that I ſhould learn what was neceſſary to my ordination. I learned therefore what was required of me to learn, I ſaid what was required of me to ſay, and accordingly was made a prieſt. I was not long, however, before I perceived too plainly that, in laying myſelf under an obligation to be no longer a man, I had engaged for more than I could poſſibly perform.

Some

Some will tell us that conſcience is founded merely on our prejudices, but I know, for certain, from my own experience, that its dictates conſtantly follow the order of nature, in contradiction to all human laws and inſtitutions. We are in vain forbid to do this thing or the other; we ſhall feel but little remorſe for doing any thing to which a well-regulated natural inſtinct excites us, how ſtrongly ſoever prohibited by reaſon. Nature, my dear youth, hath in this reſpect been hitherto ſilent to you; may you continue long in that happy ſtate wherein her voice is the voice of innocence! Remember that you offend her more by anticipating her inſtructions than by refuſing to hear them. In order to know when to liſten to her without a crime, you ſhould begin by learning to check her inſinuations.

I had always a due reſpect for marriage, as the firſt and moſt ſacred inſtitution of nature. Having given up my right to enter into ſuch an engagement, I reſolved, therefore, not to profane it: for, notwithſtanding my manner of education, as I had always led a ſimple and uniform life, I had preſerved all that clearneſs of underſtanding in which my firſt ideas were cultivated. The maxims of the world had not obſcured my primitive notions, and my poverty kept

kept me at a ſufficient diſtance from thoſe temptations that teach us the ſophiſtry of vice.

The virtuous reſolution I had formed, however, was the very cauſe of my ruin: my full determination not to violate the bed of another, left my faults expoſed to detection. It was neceſſary to expiate the ſcandal; I was accordingly ſuſpended and baniſhed; falling a ſacrifice to my ſcruples rather than to my incontinence. From the reproaches alſo made me, on my diſgrace, I found that the way to eſcape puniſhment for a crime, is often to aggravate the guilt, by committing a greater.

A few inſtances of this kind go far with perſons capable of reflection. Finding, by ſorrowful experience, the ideas I had formed of juſtice, honeſty and other moral obligations contradicted in practice; I began to give up moſt of the opinions I had received, till, at length, the few which I retained being no longer ſufficient to ſupport themſelves, I called in queſtion the evidence on which they were eſtabliſhed. Thus, knowing hardly what to think, I found myſelf at laſt reduced to your own ſituation of mind; with this difference only, that my infidelity being the later fruit of a maturer age, it was a work of greater difficulty to remove it.

I was in that ſtate of doubt and uncertainty, in which Deſcartes requires the mind to be involved, in order to enable it to inveſtigate truth. This diſpoſition of mind, however, is too diſquieting to laſt long; its duration being owing only to vice or indolence. My heart was not ſo corrupt as to ſeek ſuch indulgence; and nothing preſerves ſo well the habit of reflection, as to be more content with ourſelves than with our fortune.

I reflected therefore, on the unhappy lot of mortals, always floating on the ocean of human opinions, without compaſs or rudder; left to the mercy of their tempeſtuous paſſions, with no other guide than an unexperienced pilot, ignorant of his courſe, as well as whence he came and whither he is going. I ſaid often to myſelf; I love the truth; I ſeek, yet cannot find it; let any one ſhew it me and I will readily embrace it: Why doth it hide its charms from an heart formed to adore them?

I have frequently experienced at times much greater evils; and yet no part of my life was ever ſo conſtantly diſagreeable to me as that interval of ſcruples and anxiety. Running perpetually from one doubt and uncertainty to another, all that I could deduce from my long and

and painful meditations was incertitude, obſcurity, and contradiction; as well with regard to my exiſtence as my duty.

I cannot comprehend how any man can be ſincerely a ſceptic, on principle. Such philoſophers either do not exiſt, or they are certainly the moſt miſerable of men. To be in doubt, about things which it is important for us to know, is a ſituation too perplexing for the human mind; it cannot long ſupport ſuch incertitude; but will, in ſpite of itſelf, determine one way or other, rather deceiving itſelf than content to believe nothing of the matter.

What added further to my perplexity was, that, being educated in a church whoſe authority being univerſally deciſive, admits not of the leaſt doubt; in rejecting one point, I rejected in a manner all the reſt; and the impoſſibility of admitting ſo many abſurd deciſions, ſet me againſt thoſe which were not ſo. In being told I muſt believe all, I was prevented from believing any thing, and I knew not where to ſtop.

In this ſituation I conſulted the philoſophers; I turned over their books, and examined their ſeveral opinions: in all which I found them vain,

vain, dictatorial, and dogmatical, even in their pretended ſcepticiſm; ignorant of nothing, yet proving nothing; ridiculing one another; and in this laſt particular only wherein they were all agreed, they ſeemed to be in the right. Affecting to triumph, whenever they attacked their opponents, they wanted every thing to make them capable of a vigorous defence. If you examine their reaſons, you will find them calculated only to refute: if you number voices, every one is reduced to his own ſuffrage: they agree in nothing but diſputing: to attend to theſe, therefore, was not the way to remove my uncertainty.

I conceived that the weakneſs of the human underſtanding was the firſt cauſe of the prodigious variety I found in their ſentiments, and that pride was the ſecond. We have no ſtandard with which to meaſure this immenſe machine; we cannot calculate its various relations; we neither know the firſt cauſe nor the final effects; we are ignorant even of ourſelves; we neither know our own nature nor principle of action; nay we hardly know whether man be a ſimple or compound being; impenetrable myſteries ſurround us on every ſide; they extend beyond the region of ſenſe; we imagine ourſelves poſſeſſed of underſtanding to penetrate them,

them, and we have only imagination. Every one ſtrikes out a way of his own acroſs this imaginary world; but no one knows whether it will lead him to the point he aims at. We are yet deſirous to penetrate, to know, every thing. The only thing we know not, is to remain ignorant of what it is impoſſible for us to know. We had much rather determine at random, and believe the thing which is not, than confeſs that none of us is capable of ſeeing the thing that is. Being ourſelves but a ſmall part of that great whole, whoſe limits ſurpaſs our moſt extenſive views, and concerning which its Creator leaves us to make our idle conjectures, we are vain enough to decide what is that Whole in itſelf, and what we are in relation to it.

But were the philoſophers even in a ſituation to diſcover the truth, which of them would be intereſted in ſo doing? Each of them knows very well that his ſyſtem is no better founded than thoſe of others; he defends it, nevertheleſs, becauſe it is his own. There is not one of them, who, really knowing truth from falſhood, would not prefer the latter, of his own invention, to the former, diſcovered by any body elſe. Where is the philoſopher who would not readily deceive mankind, to increaſe

creaſe his own reputation? Where is he, who ſecretly propoſes any other object than that of diſtinguiſhing himſelf from the reſt of mankind? Provided he raiſes himſelf above the vulgar, and carries away the prize of fame from his competitors, what doth he require more? The moſt eſſential point is to think differently from the reſt of the world. Among believers he is an atheiſt, and among atheiſts he affects to be a a believer.

The firſt fruit I gathered from theſe reflections, was to learn to confine my enquries to thoſe things in which I was immediately intereſted; to remain contented in a profound ignorance of the reſt, and not to trouble myſelf ſo far as even to doubt about what it did not concern me to know.

I could ſee, farther, that inſtead of clearing up any unneceſſary doubts, the philoſophers only contributed to multiply thoſe which moſt tormented me; and reſolved abſolutely none. I therefore applied to another guide, and ſaid to myſelf; let me conſult my innate inſtructor, who will deceive me leſs than I may be deceived by others; or, at leaſt, the errors I fall into, will be my own, and I ſhall grow leſs depraved

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in the purſuit of my own illuſions, than in giving myſelf up to the deceptions of others.

Taking a retroſpect then, of the ſeveral opinions, which had ſucceſſively prevailed with me, from my infancy, I found that, although none of them were ſo evident as to produce immediate conviction, they had nevertheleſs different degrees of probability, and that my innate ſenſe of truth and falſehood leaned more or leſs to each. On this firſt obſervation, proceeding to compare, impartially and without prejudice, theſe different opinions with each other, I found that the firſt and moſt common, was alſo the moſt ſimple and moſt rational; and that it wanted nothing more, to ſecure univerſal ſuffrage, than the circumſtance of having been laſt propoſed. Let us ſuppoſe that all our philoſophers, ancient and modern, had exhauſted all their whimſical ſyſtems of power, chance, fate, neceſſity, atoms, an animated world, ſenſitive matter, materialiſm, and of every other kind; and after them, let us imagine the celebrated Dr. Clarke, enlightening the world by diſplaying the Being of Beings, the ſupreme and ſovereign diſpoſer of all things. With what univerſal admiration, with what unanimous applauſe would not the world receive this new ſyſtem, ſo great, ſo conſolatory, ſo ſublime,

lime, ſo proper to elevate the ſoul; to lay the foundations of virtue, and, at the ſame time ſo ſtriking, ſo enlightened, ſo ſimple, and, as it appears to me, pregnant with leſs incomprehenſibilities and abſurdity than any other ſyſtem whatever! I reflected that unanſwerable objections might be made to all, becauſe the human underſtanding is incapable of reſolving them, no proof therefore could be brought excluſively of any: but what difference is there in proofs! Ought not that ſyſtem then which explains every thing to be preferred, when attended with no greater difficulties than the reſt?

The love of truth, therefore, being all my philoſophy, and my method of philoſophizing the ſimple and eaſy rule of common ſenſe, which diſpenſed with the vain ſubtilty of argumentation, I re-examined, by this rule, all the intereſting knowledge I was poſſeſſed of; reſolved to admit, as evident, every thing to which I could not, in the ſincerity of my heart, refuſe my aſſent; to admit alſo, as true, all that appeared to have a neceſſary connection with the former, and to leave every thing elſe as uncertain, without rejecting or admitting it; determined not to trouble myſelf about clearing up

up any point which did not tend to utility in practice.

But, after all, who am I? What right have I to judge of theſe things? And what is it that determines my concluſions? If, ſubject to the impreſſions I receive, theſe are formed in direct conſequence of thoſe impreſſions; I trouble myſelf to no purpoſe in theſe inveſtigations. It is neceſſary therefore to examine myſelf, to know what inſtruments are made uſe of in ſuch reſearches, and how far I may confide in their uſe.

In the firſt place, I know that I exiſt, and have ſenſes whereby I am affected. This is a truth ſo ſtriking that I am compelled to acquieſce in it. But have I properly a diſtinct ſenſe of my exiſtence, or do I only know it from my various ſenſations? This is my firſt doubt; which, at preſent, it is impoſſible for me to reſolve: for, being continually affected by ſenſations, either directly from the objects of them or from the memory, how can I tell whether my ſelf-conſciouſneſs be or be not, ſomething foreign to thoſe ſenſations and independent of them.

My ſenſations are all internal, as they make me ſenſible of my own exiſtence; but the cauſe of them is external and independent, as they affect me without my conſent, and do not depend on my will, for their production or annihilation. I conceive very clearly, therefore that the ſenſation which is internal, and its cauſe or object which is external, are not one and the ſame thing.

Thus I know that I not only exiſt, but that other Beings exiſt as well as myſelf; to wit, the objects of my ſenſations; and though theſe objects ſhould be nothing but ideas; it is very certain that theſe ideas are no part of myſelf.

Now every thing that I perceive out of myſelf, and which acts on my ſenſes, I call matter; and all thoſe portions of matter which I conceive united in individual beings, I call bodies. Thus all the diſputes between the Idealiſts and Materialiſts ſignify nothing to me; their diſtinctions between the appearance and reality of bodies being chimerical.

Hence I have already acquired as certain knowledge of the exiſtence of the univerſe as of my own. I next reflect on the objects of my ſenſations; and, finding in myſelf the faculty

culty of comparing them with each other, I perceive myſelf endowed with an active power with which I was before unacquainted.

To perceive is only to feel or be ſenſible of things; to compare them is to judge of their exiſtence: to judge of things and to be ſenſible of them are very different. Things preſent themſelves to our ſenſations as ſingle, and detached from each other, ſuch as they barely exiſt in nature: but in our intellectual compariſon of them they are removed, tranſported as it were, from place to place, diſpoſed on and beſide each other, to enable us to pronounce concerning their difference and ſimilitude. The characteriſtic faculty of an intelligent, active being, is, in my opinion, that of giving a ſenſe to the word *exiſt*. In beings merely ſenſitive, I have ſearched in vain to diſcover the like force of intellect; nor can I conceive it to be in their nature. Such paſſive beings perceive every object ſingle or by itſelf; or if two objects preſent themſelves, they are perceived as united into one. Such Beings having no power to place one in competition with, beſide or upon the other, they cannot compare them or judge of their ſeparate exiſtence.

To ſee two objects at once, is not to ſee their relations to each other, nor to judge of

their difference; as to ſee many objects, though diſtinct from one another is not to reckon their number. I may poſſibly have in my mind the ideas of a great ſtick and a little one, without comparing thoſe ideas together, or judging that one is leſs than the other; as I may look at my hand without counting my fingers *. The comparative ideas of *greater* and *leſs*, as well as numerical ideas of *one*, *two*, &c. are certainly no ſenſations, although the underſtanding produces them only from our ſenſations.

It has been pretended that ſenſitive Beings diſtinguiſh ſenſations one from the other, by the actual difference there is between thoſe ſenſations: This, however, demands an explanation. When ſuch ſenſations are different, a ſenſitive Being is ſuppoſed to diſtinguiſh them by their difference; but when they are alike, they can then only diſtinguiſh them becauſe they perceive one without the other: for otherwiſe, how can two objects exactly alike, be diſtinguiſhed in a ſimultaneous ſenſation? Such objects muſt neceſſarily be blended together and taken for one and the ſame; particularly according

* M. de la Condamine tells us of a people, who knew how to reckon only as far as three. Yet theſe people, having hands, muſt neceſſarily have often ſeen their fingers without ever having counted five.

cording to that ſyſtem of philoſophy, in which it is pretended that the ſenſations repreſentative of extenſion are not extended.

When two comparative ſenſations are perceived, they make both a joint and ſeparate impreſſion; but their relation to each other is not neceſſarily perceived in conſequence of either. If the judgment we form of this relation were indeed a mere ſenſation, excited by the objects, we ſhould never be deceived in it, for it can never be denied that I truly perceive what I feel.

How therefore can I be deceived in the relation between theſe two ſticks, particularly, if they are not parallel? Why do I ſay, for inſtance, that the little one is a third part as long as the great one, when it is in reality only a fourth? Why is not the image, which is the ſenſation, conformable to its model, which is the object? It is becauſe I am active when I judge, the operation which forms the compariſon is defective, and my underſtanding, which judges of relations, mixes its errors with the truth of thoſe ſenſations which are repreſentative of objects.

Add to this a reflection, which, I am certain you will think ſtriking, when you have duly weighed it: this is, that if we were merely paſſive in the uſe of our ſenſes, there would be no communication between them: ſo that it would be impoſſible for us to know, that the body we touched with our hands and the object we ſaw with our eyes were one and the ſame. Either we ſhould not be able to perceive external objects at all, or they would appear to exiſt as five perceptible ſubſtances, of which we ſhould have no method of aſcertaining the identity.

Whatever name be given to that power of the mind, which aſſembles and compares my ſenſations; call it attention, meditation, reflection, or what you pleaſe; certain it is, that it exiſts in me, and not in the objects of thoſe ſenſations: it is I alone who produce it, altho' it be diſplayed only in conſequence of the impreſſions made on me by thoſe objects. Without being ſo far maſter over myſelf as to perceive or not perceive at pleaſure, I am ſtill more or leſs capable of making an examination into the objects perceived.

I am not, therefore, a mere ſenſitive and paſſive, but an active and intelligent Being; and, what-

whatever philoſophers may pretend, lay claim to the honour of thinking. I know only that truth depends on the exiſtence of things, and not on my underſtanding, which judges of them; and that the leſs ſuch judgment depends on me, the nearer I am certain of approaching the truth. Hence my rule, of confiding more on ſentiment than reaſon, is confirmed by reaſon itſelf.

Being thus far aſſured of my own nature and capacity, I begin to conſider the objects about me; regarding myſelf, with a kind of ſhuddering, as a creature thrown on the wide world of the univerſe, and as it were loſt in an infinite variety of other beings, without knowing any thing of what they are, either among themſelves or with regard to me.

Every thing that is perceptible to my ſenſes is matter, and I deduce all the eſſential properties of matter from thoſe ſenſible qualities, which occaſion its being perceptible, and are inſeparable from it. I ſee it ſometimes in motion and at other times at reſt; * hence I infer

* This reſt may be ſaid to be only relative; but as we perceive degrees in motion, we can very clearly conceive one of the two extremes which is reſt;

that neither motion nor reſt are eſſential to it; but motion, being an action, is clearly the effect of a cauſe, of which reſt is only the abſence. When nothing acts on matter, therefore it does not move; and for that very reaſon, that it is equally indifferent to motion and reſt, its natural ſtate is to be at reſt.

Again, I perceive in bodies two kinds of motion; that is, a mechanical or communicated motion, and a ſpontaneous or voluntary one. In the firſt, the moving cauſe is out of the body moved; and in the laſt exiſts within it. I ſhall not hence conclude, however, that the motion of a watch, for example, is ſpontaneous; for, if nothing ſhould act upon it but the ſpring, that ſpring would not wind itſelf up again when once down. For the ſame reaſon, alſo, I ſhould as little accede to the ſpontaneous motion of fluids, nor even to fire itſelf, the cauſe of their fluidity, *

You

reſt; and this we conceive ſo diſtinctly, that we are even induced to take that for abſolute reſt which is only relative. Now motion cannot be eſſential to matter, if matter can be conceived to exiſt at reſt.

* The chymiſts conceive the element of fire to be diffuſed, and ſtagnant, in thoſe mixed bodies of which it makes a part, till ſome external cauſe ſets it in motion, and changes it into palpable fire.

You will aſk me, if the motions of animals are ſpontaneous? I will freely anſwer, I cannot poſitively tell, but analogy ſpeaks in the affirmative. You may aſk me farther, how I know there is any ſuch thing as ſpontaneous motion? I anſwer, very well, becauſe I feel it. I *will* to move my arm, and accordingly it moves, without the intervention of any other immediate cauſe. It is in vain to endeavour to reaſon me out of this ſentiment; it is more powerful than any rational evidence: you might as well attempt to convince me that I do not exiſt.

If the actions of men are not ſpontaneous, and there be no ſuch ſpontaneous action in what paſſes on earth, we are only the more embarraſſed to conceive what is the firſt cauſe of all motion. For my part, I am ſo fully perſuaded, that the natural ſtate of matter is a ſtate of reſt, and that it has in itſelf no principle of activity, that whenever I ſee a body in motion, I inſtantly conclude either that it is an animated body, or that its motion is communicated to it. My underſtanding will by no means acquieſce in the notion that unorganized matter can move of itſelf, or be productive of any kind of action.

The viſible univerſe, however, is compoſed of inanimate matter *, which appears to have nothing in its compoſition of organization, or that ſenſation which is common to the parts of an animated body: as it is certain that we ourſelves being parts thereof, do not perceive our exiſtence in the whole. The univerſe alſo is in motion; and its movements being all regular, uniform and ſubjected to conſtant laws, nothing appears therein ſimilar to that liberty which is remarkable in the ſpontaneous motion of men and animals. The world, therefore, is not an huge ſelf-moving animal, but receives its motions from ſome foreign cauſe, which we do not perceive: but I am ſo ſtrongly perſuaded within myſelf of the exiſtence of this cauſe, that it is impoſſible for me to obſerve the apparent diurnal revolution of the ſun, without conceiving that ſome force muſt urge it forward; or, if it is the earth itſelf that turns, I cannot but conceive that ſome hand muſt turn it.

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* I have made the ſtrongeſt efforts I am able, to conceive the exiſtence of a living molecule or primary element, but in vain. The idea of matter, perceiving without organs of perception, appears to me contradictory and unintelligible. To reject or adopt this notion, it is neceſſary we ſhould firſt comprehend it; and I muſt confeſs I am not ſo happy.

If it be neceſſary to admit general laws, that have no apparent relation to matter, from what fixed point muſt that enquiry ſet out? Thoſe laws, being nothing real, or ſubſtantial, have ſome prior foundation equally unknown and occult. Experience and obſervation have taught us the laws of motion; theſe laws, however, determine effects only without diſplaying their cauſes; and therefore, are not ſufficient to explain the ſyſtem of the univerſe. Deſcartes could form a model of the heavens and the earth with dice; but he could not give their motions to thoſe dice, nor bring into play his centrifugal force without the aſſiſtance of a rotatory motion. Newton diſcovered the law of attraction; but attraction alone would ſoon have reduced the univerſe into one ſolid maſs: to this law, therefore, he found it neceſſary to add a projectile force, in order to account for the revolution of the heavenly bodies. Could Deſcartes tell us by what phyſical law his vortices were put and kept in motion? Could Newton produce the hand that firſt impelled the planets in the tangent of their reſpective orbits?

The firſt cauſes of motion do not exiſt in matter; bodies receive from and communicate motion to each other, but they cannot originally produce it. The more I obſerve the action

tion and reaction of the powers of nature acting on each other, the more I am convinced that they are merely effects, and that we muſt ever recur to ſome volition as the firſt cauſe; for to ſuppoſe there is a progreſſion of cauſes to infinity, is to ſuppoſe there is no firſt cauſe at all. In a word, every motion, that is not produced by ſome other, muſt be the effect of a ſpontaneous, voluntary act: inanimate bodies have no action but motion; and there can be no real action without volition. Such is my firſt principle. I believe, therefore, that a *Will* gives motion to the univerſe, and animates all nature. This is my firſt article of faith.

In what manner volition is productive of phyſical and corporeal action, I know not, but I experience within myſelf that it is productive of it. I *will* to act, and the action immediately ſucceeds; I *will* to move my body, and my body inſtantly moves; but, that an inanimate body, lying at reſt, ſhould move itſelf or produce motion is incomprehenſible and unprecedented. The *Will* alſo is known by its effects and not by its eſſence. I know it as the cauſe of motion; but, to conceive matter producing motion, would be evidently to conceive an effect without a cauſe, or rather not to conceive any thing at all.

It

It is no more poſſible for me to conceive how the will moves the body, than how the ſenſations affect the ſoul. I even know not why one of theſe myſteries ever appeared more explicable than the other. For my own part, whether at the time I am active or paſſive, the means of union between the two ſubſtances appear to me abſolutely incomprehenſible. Is it not ſtrange that the philoſophers have thrown off this incomprehenſibility, merely to confound the two ſubſtances together, as if operations ſo different could be better explained as the effects of one ſubject than of two.

The principle which I have here laid down, is undoubtedly ſomething obſcure; it is however intelligible, and contains nothing repugnant to reaſon or obſervation: can we ſay as much of the doctrines of materialiſm? It is very certain that, if motion be eſſential to matter, it would be inſeparable from it; it would be always the ſame in every portion of it, incommunicable, and incapable of increaſe or diminution; it would be impoſſible for us even to conceive matter at reſt. Again, when I am told that motion is not indeed eſſential to matter, but neceſſary to its exiſtence. I ſee through the attempt to impoſe on me, by a form of words, which it would be more eaſy to refute, if more intelligible.

telligible. For, whether the motion of matter ariſes from itſelf, and is therefore eſſential to it, or whether it is derived from ſome external cauſe, it is no farther neceſſary to it than as the moving cauſe acting thereon: ſo that we ſtill remain under the firſt difficulty.

General and abſtract ideas form the ſource of our greateſt errors. The jargon of metaphyſics never diſcovered one truth; but it has filled philoſophy with abſurdities of which we are aſhamed, as ſoon as they are ſtript of their pompous expreſſions. Tell me truly, my friend, if, when you are told of a blind, unintelligent power being diffuſed throughout all nature, any preciſe idea is conveyed to your underſtanding? It is imagined that ſomething is meant by thoſe vague terms, Univerſal force and Neceſſary motion; and yet they convey no meaning. The idea of motion is nothing more than the idea of paſſing from one place to another, nor can there be any motion without ſome particular direction; for no individual Being can move ſeveral ways at once. In what manner, then, is it, that matter neceſſarily moves? Has all the matter of which bodies are compoſed, a general and uniform motion, or has each atom a particular motion of its own? If we give into the firſt notion, the whole univerſe will appear

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to be one ſolid and indiviſible maſs; and according to the ſecond, it ſhould conſtitute a diffuſed and incoherent fluid, without a poſſibility that two atoms ever could be united. What can be the direction of this motion common to all matter? Is it in a right line upwards or downwards, to the right or to the left? Again, if every particle of matter has its particular direction, what can be the cauſe of all thoſe directions and their variations? If every atom or particle of matter revolved only on its axis, none of them would change their place, and there would be no motion communicated; and even in this caſe it is neceſſary that ſuch a revolving motion ſhould be carried on one way. To aſcribe to matter, motion in the abſtract, is to make uſe of terms without a meaning; and in giving it any determinate motion, we muſt of neceſſity ſuppoſe the cauſe that determines it. The more I multiply particular forces, the more new cauſes have I to explain, without ever finding one common agent that directs them. So far from being able to conceive any regularity or order in the fortuitous concourſe of elements, I cannot even conceive the nature of their concurrence; and an univerſal chaos is more inconceivable than univerſal harmony. I eaſily comprehend that the mechaniſm of the world cannot be perfectly known

to

to the human underſtanding; but, whenever men undertake to explain it, they ought at leaſt to ſpeak in ſuch a manner that others may underſtand them.

If from matter being put in motion I diſcover the exiſtence of a *Will*, as the firſt active cauſe, this matter being ſubjected to certain regular laws of motion, diſplay alſo intelligence: This is my ſecond article of faith. To act, to compare, to prefer, are the operations of an active, thinking being; ſuch a being, therefore, exiſts. Do you proceed to aſk me, where I diſcover its exiſtence? I anſwer, not only in the revolutions of the celeſtial bodies; not only in myſelf; but in the flocks that feed on the plain, in the birds that fly in the air, in the ſtone that falls to the ground, and in the leaf that trembles in the wind.

I am enabled to judge of the phyſical order of things, although ignorant of their final cauſe; becauſe, to be able to form ſuch a judgment, it is ſufficient for me to compare the ſeveral parts of the viſible univerſe with each other, to ſtudy their mutual concurrence, their reciprocal relations, and to obſerve the general reſult of the whole. I am ignorant why the univerſe exiſts, but I am enabled nevertheleſs to ſee how it is modified;

modified; I cannot fail to perceive that intimate connection, by which the ſeveral beings it is compoſed of, afford each other mutual aſſiſtance. I reſemble, in this reſpect, a man who ſees the inſide of a watch, for the firſt time, and is captivated with the beauty of the work, although ignorant of its uſe. I know not, he may ſay, what this machine is good for, but I ſee that each part is made to fit ſome other; I admire the artiſt for every part of his performance, and am certain that all theſe wheels act thus in concert to ſome common end which it is impoſſible for me to ſee.

But let us compare the partial and particular ends, the means whereby they are effected, and their conſtant relations of every kind; then let us appeal to our innate ſenſe of conviction; what man in his ſenſes can refuſe to acquieſce in ſuch teſtimony? To what unprejudiced view does not the viſible arrangement of the univerſe diſplay the ſupreme intelligence of its author? How much ſophiſtry does it not require, to diſavow the harmony of created beings, and that admirable order in which all the parts of the ſyſtem concur to the preſervation of each other? You may talk to me as much as you pleaſe, of combinations and chances; what end will it anſwer to reduce me to ſilence, if you cannot

cannot perſuade me into the truth of what you advance? and how will you diveſt me of that involuntary ſentiment, which continually contradicts you? If organiſed bodies are fortuitouſly combined in a thouſand ways, before they aſſume ſettled and conſtant forms; if at firſt there are formed ſtomachs without mouths, feet without heads, hands without arms, and imperfect organs of every kind, which have periſhed for want of the neceſſary faculties of ſelf-preſervation; how comes it that none of theſe imperfect eſſays have engaged our attention? Why hath nature, at length, confined herſelf to laws to which ſhe was not at firſt ſubjected? I confeſs that I ought not to be ſurpriſed that any poſſible thing ſhould happen, when the rarity of the event is compenſated by the great odds that it did not happen. And yet if any one was to tell me that a number of Printers types, jumbled promiſcuouſly together, had diſpoſed themſelves in the order of the letters compoſing the Æneid, I certainly ſhould not deign to take one ſtep to verify or diſprove ſuch a ſtory. It may be ſaid, I forget the number of chances; but pray how many muſt I ſuppoſe to render ſuch a combination in any degree probable? I, who ſee only the one, muſt conclude that there is an infinite number againſt it, and that it is not the effect of chance. Add to this

that

that the product of theſe combinations muſt be always of the ſame nature with the combined elements; hence life and organization never can reſult from a blind concourſe of atoms, nor will the chymiſt, with all his art in compounds, ever find ſenſation and thought at the bottom of his crucible. *.

I have been frequently ſurpriſed, and ſometimes ſcandalized, in the reading of Nieuwentheit. What a preſumption was it to ſit down to make a book of thoſe wonders of nature that diſplay the wiſdom of their author? Had his book been as big as the whole world, he would not have exhauſted his ſubject; and no ſooner do we enter into the minutiæ of things than the greateſt wonder of all eſcapes us; that is, the

* It would be incredible, if we had not proof of it, that human extravagance could be carried to ſuch a pitch. *Amatus Luſitanus* aſſures us, that he had ſeen in a Phial an Homuncule, about an inch long, which *Julius Camillus*, like another *Prometheus*, had generated by his ſkill in Alchemy. *Paracelſus*, in his treatiſe *de natura rerum*, gives the proceſs of making theſe Mannikins, and maintains that Pygmies, Fauns, Satyrs and Nymphs were engendered by Chymiſtry. There wants nothing more, in my opinion, to eſtabliſh the poſſibility of theſe facts, than to prove that the organical materials can reſiſt fire, and that the component moleculæ may preſerve themſelves alive in the intenſe heat of a reverberatory furnace.

the harmony and connection of the whole. The generation of living and organiſed bodies alone, baffles all the efforts of the human underſtanding. That inſurmountable barrier, which nature hath placed between the various ſpecies of animals, that they might not be confounded with each other, makes her intentions ſufficiently evident. Not contented only to eſtabliſh order, ſhe hath taken effectual methods to prevent its being diſturbed.

There is not a Being in the univerſe which may not, in ſome reſpect, be regarded as the common centre of all others, which are ranged around it in ſuch a manner that they ſerve reciprocally as cauſe and effect to one another. The imagination is loſt and the underſtanding confounded in ſuch an infinite diverſity of relations, of which, however, not one of them is either loſt or confounded in the crowd. How abſurd the ſuppoſition, to deduce this wonderful harmony from the blind mechaniſm of a fortuitous jumble of atoms! Thoſe who deny the unity of deſign, ſo manifeſt in the relation of all the parts of this grand ſyſtem, may endeavour, as much as they will, to conceal their abſurdities with abſtract ideas, co-ordinations, general principles, and emblematical terms; whatever they may advance, it is impoſſible for me to conceive that

that a ſyſtem of beings can be ſo duly regulated, without the exiſtence of ſome intelligent cauſe which effects ſuch regulation. It is not in my power to believe that paſſive inanimate matter could ever have produced living and ſenſible creatures; that a blind fatality ſhould be productive of intelligent beings; or, that a cauſe, incapable itſelf of thinking, ſhould produce the faculty of thinking in its effect.

I believe therefore, that the world is governed by a wiſe and powerful Will. I ſee it, or rather I feel it; and this is of importance for me to know: but is the world eternal or is it created? Are things derived from one ſelf exiſtent principle? or are there two, or more? and what is their eſſence? Of all this I know nothing, nor do I ſee that it is of any conſequence I ſhould. In proportion as ſuch knowledge may become intereſting, I will endeavour to acquire it: but, farther than this, I give up all ſuch idle diſquiſitions, which ſerve only to make me diſcontented with myſelf, are uſeleſs in practice, and above my underſtanding.

You will remember, however, that I am not dictating my ſentiments to you; but only diſplaying what they are. Whether matter be eternal or only created, whether it have a paſ-

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ſive principle or not, certain it is that the whole univerſe is one deſign, and ſufficiently diſplays one intelligent agent: for I ſee no part of this ſyſtem that is not under regulation, or that does not concur to one and the ſame end; viz. that of preſerving the preſent eſtabliſhed order of things. That Being, whoſe will is his deed, whoſe principle of action is in himſelf, that Being, in a word, whatever it be, that gives motion to all the parts of the univerſe and governs all things, I call GOD.

To this term I annex the ideas of intelligence, power and will, which I have collected from the order of things; and to theſe I add that of goodneſs, which is a neceſſary conſequence of their union: but I am not at all the wiſer concerning the eſſence of the Being to which I give theſe attributes: he remains at an equal diſtance from my ſenſes and my underſtanding: the more I think of him, the more I am confounded; I know of a certainty that he exiſts, and that his exiſtence is independent of any of his creatures: I know alſo that my exiſtence is dependent on his, and that every thing I know is in the ſame ſituation with myſelf. I perceive the deity in all his works, I feel him within me, and behold him in every object around me: but, I no ſooner endeavour to

to contemplate what he is in himſelf; I no ſooner enquire where he is, and what is his ſubſtance, than he eludes the ſtrongeſt efforts of my imagination; and my bewildered underſtanding is convinced of its own weakneſs.

For this reaſon I ſhall never take upon me to argue, about the nature of God, farther than I am obliged to it by the relation he appears to ſtand in to myſelf. There is ſo great a temerity in ſuch diſquiſitions, that a wiſe man will never enter on them without trembling and being fully aſſured of his incapacity to proceed far on ſo ſublime a ſubject: for it is leſs injurious to the deity to entertain no ideas of him at all, than to harbour thoſe which are depreciating and unjuſt.

After having diſcovered thoſe of his attributes, by which I am convinced of his exiſtence, I return to myſelf and conſider the place I occupy in that order of things, which is directed by him and ſubjected to my examination. Here I find my ſpecies ſtand inconteſtibly in the firſt rank; as man, by virtue of his will and the inſtruments he is poſſeſſed of to put it in execution, has a greater power over the bodies by which he is ſurrounded, than they, by mere phyſical impulſe, have over him: by virtue of

his intelligence alſo I find he is the only created being here below that can take a general ſurvey of the whole ſyſtem. Is there one among them except man, who knows how to obſerve all others? to weigh, to calculate, to foreſee their motions, their effects, and to join, if I may ſo expreſs myſelf, the ſentiment of a general exiſtence to that of the individual? What is there ſo very ridiculous in ſuppoſing every thing made for man, when he is the only created Being, who knows how to conſider the relation in which all things ſtand to himſelf.

It is then true that man is lord of the creation, that he is, at leaſt, ſovereign over the habitable earth; for it is certain that he not only ſubdues all other animals, and even diſpoſes of the elements at his pleaſure by his induſtry; but he alone of all other terreſtrial beings knows how to ſubject the earth to his convenience, and even to appropriate to his uſe, by contemplation, the very ſtars and planets he cannot approach. Let any one produce me an animal of another ſpecies, who knows how to make uſe of fire, or hath faculties to admire the ſun. What! am I able to obſerve, to know other beings and their relations; am I capable of diſcovering what is order, beauty, virtue, of contemplating the univerſe, of elevating my ideas

ideas to the hand which governs the whole; am I capable of loving what is good, and doing it, and ſhall I compare myſelf to the brutes? Abject ſoul! it is your gloomy philoſophy alone that renders you at all like them. Or, rather, it is in vain you would debaſe yourſelf; your own genius riſes up againſt your principles; your benevolent heart gives the lie to your abſurd doctrines, and even the abuſe of your faculties demonſtrates their excellence in ſpite of yourſelf.

For my own part, who have no ſyſtem to maintain, who am only a ſimple, honeſt man, attached to no party, unambitious of being the founder of any ſect, and contented with the ſituation in which God hath placed me, I ſee nothing in the world, except the deity, better than my own ſpecies; and were I left to chooſe my place in the order of created beings, I ſee none that I could prefer to that of man.

This reflection, however, is leſs vain than affecting; for my ſtate is not the effect of choice, and could not be due to the merit of a being that did not before exiſt. Can I behold myſelf, nevertheleſs, thus diſtinguiſhed, without thinking myſelf happy in occupying ſo honourable a poſt; or without bleſſing the hand that placed

me here? From the firſt view I thus took of myſelf, my heart began to glow with a ſenſe of gratitude toward the author of our being; and hence aroſe my firſt idea of the worſhip due to a beneficent deity. I adore the ſupreme power, and melt into tenderneſs at his goodneſs. I have no need to be taught artificial forms of worſhip; the dictates of nature are ſufficient. Is it not a natural conſequence of ſelf-love, to honour thoſe who protect us, and to love ſuch as do us good?

But when I come afterwards, to take a view of the particular rank and relation in which I ſtand, as an individual, among the fellow-creatures of my ſpecies; to conſider the different ranks of ſociety and the perſons by whom they are filled; what a ſcene is preſented me! Where is that order and regularity before obſerved? The ſcenes of nature preſent to my view the moſt perfect harmony and proportion: thoſe of mankind nothing but confuſion and diſorder. The phyſical elements of things act in concert with each other, the moral world alone is a chaos of diſcord. Mere animals are happy, but man, their lord and ſovereign, is miſerable! Where, ſupreme wiſdom! are thy laws? Is it thus, O providence! thou governeſt the world? What is become of thy power, thou ſupreme beneficence!

ficence! when I ſee evil prevailing on the earth?

Would you believe, my good friend, that, from ſuch gloomy reflections and apparent contradictions, I ſhould form to myſelf more ſublime ideas of the ſoul, than ever reſulted from my former reſearches? In meditating on the nature of man, I conceived that I diſcovered two diſtinct principles; the one raiſing him to the ſtudy of eternal truths, the love of juſtice and moral beauty, bearing him aloft to the regions of the intellectual world, the contemplation of which yields the trueſt delight to the Philoſopher; the other debaſing him even below himſelf, ſubjecting him to the ſlavery of ſenſe, the tyranny of the paſſions, and exciting theſe to counteract every noble and generous ſentiment inſpired by the former. When I perceived myſelf hurried away by two ſuch contrary powers, I naturally concluded that man is not one ſimple and individual ſubſtance. I will, and I will not, I perceive myſelf at once free and a ſlave; I ſee what is good, I admire it, and yet I do the evil: I am active when I liſten to my reaſon, and paſſive when hurried away by my paſſions; while my greateſt uneaſineſs is, to find, when fallen under temptations, that I had the power of reſiſting them.

Attend, young man, with confidence, to what I ſay, you will find I ſhall never deceive you. If conſcience be the offspring of our prejudices, I am doubtleſs in the wrong, and moral virtue is not to be demonſtrated; but, if ſelf-love, which makes us preſer ourſelves to every thing elſe, be natural to man, and if nevertheleſs, an innate ſenſe of juſtice be found in his heart; let thoſe, who imagine him to be a ſimple uncompounded Being reconcile theſe contradictions, and I will give up my opinion, and acknowledge him to be one ſubſtance.

You will pleaſe to obſerve that, by the word ſubſtance, I here mean, in general, a Being, poſſeſſed of ſome primitive quality, abſtracted from all particular or ſecondary modifications. Now, if all known primitive qualities may be united in one and the ſame Being, we have no need to admit of more than one ſubſtance; but if ſome of theſe qualities are incompatible with, and neceſſarily excluſive of each other, we muſt admit of the exiſtence of as many different ſubſtances as there are ſuch incompatible qualities. You will do well to reflect on this ſubject; for my part, notwithſtanding what Mr. Locke hath ſaid on this head, I need only to know that matter is extended and diviſible, to be aſſured that it cannot think; and when a philoſopher comes

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and tells me that trees and rocks have thought and perception*, he may embarraſs me, indeed,

* It ſeems to me that, ſo far from attributing thought to ſtocks and ſtones, our modern philoſophers have diſcovered that even men are incapable of thinking. They acknowledge none but merely ſenſitive Beings in nature; and all the difference they admit between a man and a ſtone is, that the former is a ſenſitive Being poſſeſſed of ſenſations, and the latter a ſenſitive Being that has none. But if it be true that all matter be ſenſible, wherein conſiſts the conſciouſneſs of the individual? Is it in every particle of matter, or only in compound bodies, in heterogeneous mixtures or ſingle elements? does the individual exiſt alike in fluids and in ſolids? Is it ſaid that nothing but individuals exiſt in nature, I aſk what theſe individuals are? Is that ſtone, for inſtance, an individual or an aggregate of individuals? Is it a ſingle ſenſitive Being, or does it contain as many ſeparate ones as it contains grains of ſand? If every elementary atom be a ſenſitive Being, how am I to conceive that intimate communication, by which one ſo perceives itſelf in another, that their two ſeparate identities are confounded in one? Attraction is one of the laws of nature, the myſtery of which may poſſibly be impenetrable; but we are at leaſt capable of conceiving that gravity, acting in the ratio of the quantity of matter, is neither incompatible with extenſion nor diviſibility. Can you conceive the ſame of thought and ſentiment? The ſenſible parts are extended, but the ſenſitive Being is ſingle and indiviſible; it is either entirely itſelf or nothing: the ſenſitive Being, therefore, is not a body. I know not how the materialiſts conceive this thing; but it ſeems to me that the ſame difficulties which make them give up their pretenſions to thought, ſhould induce them alſo to give up thoſe

of

with the ſubtilty of his arguments; but I cannot help regarding him as a diſingenuous ſophiſt, who had rather attribute ſentiment to ſtocks and ſtones than acknowledge man to have a ſoul.

Let us ſuppoſe that a man, born deaf, ſhould deny the reality of ſounds, becauſe his ears were never ſenſible of them. To convince him of his error, I place a violin before his eyes; and, by playing on another, concealed from him, give a vibration to the ſtrings of the former. This motion I tell him is effected by ſound. Not at all, ſays he, the cauſe of the vibration of the ſtring, is in the ſtring itſelf; it is a common quality in all bodies, ſo to vibrate: do, I reply, ſhew me then the ſame vibration in other bodies, or at leaſt the cauſe of it in this ſtring? The deaf man will again reply, in his turn, "I cannot; but wherefore muſt I, becauſe I "do not conceive how this ſtring vibrates, at- "tribute the cauſe to your pretended ſounds, of "which I cannot entertain the leaſt idea. "This would be to attempt an explanation of "one obſcurity by another ſtill greater. Either "make

of ſentiment: nor do I ſee what ſhould hinder them, after having taken the firſt ſtep, from proceeding to take the latter: what can it coſt them more? As they are ſo well convinced they are incapable of thinking, how dare they ſo confidently affirm they are able to perceive?

" make your ſounds perceptible to me, or I " ſhall continue to deny their exiſtence."

The more I reflect on our capacity of thinking, and the nature of the human underſtanding, the greater is the reſemblance I find between the arguments of our materialiſts and that of ſuch a deaf man. They are, in effect, equally deaf to that internal voice, which nevertheleſs, calls to them ſo loud and emphatically. A mere machine is evidently incapable of thinking, it has neither motion nor figure productive of reflection: whereas in man there exiſts ſomething, perpetually prone to expand, and to burſt the fetters by which it is confined. Space itſelf affords not bounds to the human mind: the whole univerſe is not extenſive enough for him; his ſentiments, his deſires, his anxieties, and even his pride, take riſe from a principle, different from that body within which he perceives himſelf confined.

No material Being can be ſelf-active, and I perceive that I am ſo. It is in vain to diſpute with me ſo clear a point; my own ſentiment carries with it a ſtronger conviction than any reaſon which can ever be brought againſt it. I have a body, on which other bodies act; and which acts reciprocally on them. This reci-

procal action is indubitable; but my will is independent of my ſenſes. I can either conſent to, or reſiſt their impreſſions; I am either vanquiſhed or victor, and perceive clearly within myſelf when I act according to my will, and when I ſubmit to be governed by my paſſions. I have always the power to will, though not the force to execute it. When I give myſelf up to any temptation, I act from the impulſe of external objects. When I reproach myſelf for my weakneſs in ſo doing, I liſten only to the dictates of my will: I am a ſlave in my vices, and free in my repentance; the ſentiment of my liberty is effaced only by my depravation, and when I prevent the voice of the ſoul from being heard in oppoſition to the laws of the body.

All the knowledge I have of volition, is deduced from a ſenſe of my own; and the underſtanding is known no better. When I am aſked what is the cauſe that determines my will, I aſk in my turn, what is the cauſe that determines my judgment? for it is clear that theſe two cauſes make but one; and, if we conceive that man is active in forming his judgment of things, that his underſtanding is only a power of comparing and judging, we ſhall ſee that his liberty is only a ſimilar power or one derived from this: he

chooſes

chooſes the good as he judges of the true, and for the ſame reaſon as he deduces a falſe judgment, he makes a bad choice. What then is the cauſe that determines his will? It is his judgment. And what is the cauſe that determines his judgment? It is his intelligent faculty, his power of judging; the determining cauſe lies in himſelf. If we go beyond this point, I know nothing of the matter.

Not that I can ſuppoſe myſelf at liberty, not to will my own good, or to will my own evil: but my liberty conſiſts in this very circumſtance, that I am incapable to will any thing but what is uſeful to me, or at leaſt what appears ſo, without any foreign object interfering in my determination. Does it follow from hence that I am not my own maſter, becauſe I am incapable of aſſuming another Being, or of diveſting myſelf of what is eſſential to my exiſtence?

The principle of all action lies in the will of a free Being; we can go no farther, in ſearch of its ſource. It is not the word liberty that has no ſignification; it is that of neceſſity. To ſuppoſe any act or effect, which is not derived from an active principle, is indeed to ſuppoſe effects without a cauſe. Either there is no firſt impulſe, or every firſt impulſe can have no prior cauſe;

cauſe; nor can there be any ſuch thing as will, without liberty. Man is, therefore, a free agent, and as ſuch animated by an immaterial ſubſtance; this is my third article of faith. From theſe three firſt, you may eaſily deduce all the reſt, without my continuing to number them.

If man be an active and free Being, he acts of himſelf; none of his ſpontaneous actions, therefore, enter into the general ſyſtem of providence, nor can be imputed to it. Providence doth not contrive the evil, which is the conſequence of man's abuſing the liberty his Creator gave him; it only doth not prevent it, either becauſe the evil, which ſo impotent a Being is capable of doing, is beneath its notice, or becauſe it cannot prevent it without laying a reſtraint upon his liberty, and cauſing a greater evil by debaſing his nature. Providence hath left man at liberty, not that he ſhould do evil, but good, by choice. It hath capacitated him to make ſuch choice, in making a proper uſe of the faculties it hath beſtowed on him: his powers, however, are at the ſame time ſo limited and confined that the abuſe he makes of his liberty, is not of importance enough to diſturb the general order of the univerſe. The evil done by man, falls upon his own head, without making any change in the ſyſtem of the world, without hindering

hindering the human ſpecies from being preſerved in ſpite of themſelves. To complain, therefore, that God doth not prevent man from doing evil, is in fact to complain that he hath given a ſuperior excellence to human nature, that he hath ennobled our actions by annexing to them the merit of virtue. The higheſt enjoyment is that of being contented with ourſelves, it is in order to deſerve this contentment that we are placed here on earth and endowed with liberty; that we are tempted by our paſſions, and reſtrained by conſcience. What could Omnipotence itſelf do more in our favor? Could it have eſtabliſhed a contradiction in our nature, or have allotted a reward for well-doing, to a Being incapable of doing ill? Is it neceſſary, in order to prevent man from being wicked, to reduce all his faculties to a ſimple inſtinct, and make him a mere brute? No, never can I reproach the Deity for having given me a ſoul, made in his own image, that I might be free, good and happy like himſelf.

It is the abuſe of our faculties which makes us wicked and miſerable. Our cares, our anxieties, our griefs, are all owing to ourſelves. Moral evil is inconteſtably our own work, and phyſical evil would in fact be nothing, did not our vices render us ſenſible of it. Is it not for

our preſervation that nature makes us ſenſible of our wants? Is not pain of body an indication that the machine is out of order, and a caution for us to provide a remedy? And as to death—do not the wicked render both our lives and their own miſerable? Who is there deſirous of living here for ever? Death is a remedy for all the evils we inflict on ourſelves; nature will not let us ſuffer perpetually. To how few evils are men ſubject, who live in primeval ſimplicity! they hardly know any diſeaſe, and are irritated by ſcarcely any paſſions: they neither foreſee death, nor ſuffer by the apprehenſions of it; when it approaches, their miſeries render it deſirable, and it is to them no evil. If we could be contented with being what we are, we ſhould have no inducement to lament our fate; but we inflict on ourſelves a thouſand real evils in ſeeking after an imaginary happineſs. Thoſe who are impatient under trifling inconveniencies, muſt expect to ſuffer much greater. In our endeavours to re-eſtabliſh by medicines a conſtitution impaired by irregularities, we always add to the evil we feel, the greater one which we fear; our apprehenſions of death anticipate its horrors and haſten its approach. The faſter we endeavour to fly, the ſwifter it purſues us; thus are we terrified as long as we live, and die, murmuring againſt nature, on account

count of thoſe evils, which we bring on ourſelves by doing outrage to her laws.

Enquire no longer, man, who is the author of evil: behold him in yourſelf. There exiſts no other evil in nature than what you either do or ſuffer, and you are equally the author of both. A general evil could exiſt only in diſorder, but, in the ſyſtem of nature, I ſee an eſtabliſhed order which is never diſturbed. Particular evil exiſts only in the ſentiment of the ſuffering Being: and this ſentiment is not given to man by nature; but is of his own acquiſition. Pain and ſorrow have but little hold on thoſe, who, unaccuſtomed to reflection, have neither memory nor foreſight. Take away our fatal improvements, take away our errors and our vices, take away, in ſhort, every thing that is the work of man, and all the reſt is good.

Where every thing is good, nothing can be unjuſt, juſtice being inſeparable from goodneſs. Now goodneſs is the neceſſary effect of infinite power, and ſelf-love eſſential to every Being conſcious of its exiſtence. An omnipotent Being extends its exiſtence, alſo, if I may ſo expreſs myſelf, with that of its creatures. Production and preſervation follow from the conſtant exertion of its power: it does not act on non-exiſtence:

iſtence: God is not the God of the dead, but of the living; he cannot be miſchievous or wicked without hurting himſelf. A being capable of doing every thing cannot *will* to do any thing but what is good. He, who is infinitely good, therefore, becauſe he is infinitely powerful, muſt alſo be ſupremely juſt, otherwiſe he would be inconſiſtent with himſelf: for that love of order which produces it we call goodneſs, and that love of order which preſerves it is called juſtice.

God, it is ſaid, owes nothing to his creatures; for my part, I believe he owes them every thing he promiſed them when he gave them being. Now what is leſs than to promiſe them a bleſſing, if he gives them an idea of it and has ſo conſtituted them as to feel the want of it? The more I look into myſelf, the more plainly I read theſe words written in my ſoul; *be juſt and thou wilt be happy.* I ſee not the truth of this, however, in the preſent ſtate of things, wherein the wicked triumph and the juſt are trampled on and oppreſſed. What indignation, hence, ariſes within us, to find our hopes are fruſtrated! conſcience itſelf riſes up and complains of its Maker, it cries out to him; lamenting, *thou haſt deceived me!*

"I have deceived thee! raſh man! who
"hath told thee ſo? Is thy ſoul annihilated?
"doſt thou ceaſe to exiſt? — Oh Brutus!
"ſtain not a life of glory in the end: leave
"not thy honour and thy hopes with thy body
"in the fields of Philippi. Wherefore doſt
"thou ſay, virtue is a ſhadow, when thou art
"going to enjoy the reward of thine own?
"Doſt thou imagine thou art going to die?
"no, thou art going to live, and then I will
"make good every promiſe I have made thee."

One would be apt to think, from the murmurs of impatient mortals, that God owed them a recompence before they had deſerved it; and that he was obliged to reward their virtue beforehand. No, let us be firſt virtuous, and reſt aſſured we ſhall ſooner or later be happy. Let us not require the prize before we have got the victory, nor demand the price of our labor before the work be finiſhed. It is not in the liſts, ſays Plutarch, that the victors, at our games, are crowned, but after the conteſt is over.

If the ſoul be immaterial, it may ſurvive the body, and if ſo providence is juſtified. Had I no other proof of the immateriality of the ſoul, than the oppreſſion of the juſt and the triumph of the wicked in this world, this alone would prevent

prevent my having the leaſt doubt of it. So ſhocking a diſcord amidſt the general harmony of things, would make me naturally look out for the cauſe. I ſhould ſay to myſelf, we do not ceaſe to exiſt, with this life, every thing reaſſumes its order after death. I ſhould, indeed, be embarraſſed to tell where man was to be found, when all his perceptible properties were deſtroyed. At preſent, however, there appears to me no difficulty in this point, as I acknowledge the exiſtence of two different ſubſtances. It is very plain that during my corporeal life, as I perceive nothing but by means of my ſenſes, whatever is not ſubmitted to their cognizance muſt eſcape me. When the union of the body and the ſoul is broken, I conceive that the one may be diſſolved, and the other preſerved entire. Why ſhould the diſſolution of the one, neceſſarily bring on that of the other? on the contrary, being ſo different in their natures, their ſtate of union is a ſtate of violence, and when it is broken they both return to their natural ſituation: the active and living ſubſtance regains all the force it had employed in giving motion to the paſſive and dead ſubſtance to which it had been united. Alas! my failings make me but too ſenſible that man is but half alive in this life, and that the life of the ſoul commences at the death of the body.

But

But what is that life? Is the ſoul immortal in its own nature? My limited comprehenſion is incapable of conceiving any thing that is unlimited. Whatever we call infinite, is beyond my conception. What can I deny, or affirm, what arguments can I employ on a ſubject I cannot conceive? I believe that the ſoul ſurvives the body ſo long as is neceſſary to juſtify providence in the good order of things; but who knows that this will be for ever? I can readily conceive how material bodies wear away and are deſtroyed by the ſeparation of their parts, but I cannot conceive a like diſſolution of a thinking being; and hence, as I cannot imagine how it can die, I preſume it cannot die at all. This preſumption, alſo, being conſolatory, and not unreaſonable, why ſhould I be fearful to indulge it?

I feel that I have a ſoul, I know it both from thought and ſentiment; I know that it exiſts, without knowing its eſſence; I cannot reaſon, therefore, on ideas which I have not. One thing, indeed, I know very well, which is that the identity of my being, can be preſerved only by the memory, and that to be in fact the ſame perſon, I muſt remember to have before exiſted. Now I cannot recollect, after my death, what I was during life; without recollecting alſo my perceptions

perceptions and conſequently my actions: and I doubt not but this remembrance will one day conſtitute the happineſs of the juſt and the torments of the wicked. Here below, the violence of our paſſions abſorbs the innate ſentiment of right and wrong, and ſtifles remorſe. The mortification and diſgrace alſo, under which virtue labors in the world, prevents our being ſenſible of its charms. But, when delivered from the deluſions of ſenſe, we ſhall enjoy the contemplation of the Supreme Being, and thoſe eternal truths of which he is the ſource; when the beauty of the natural order of things, ſhall ſtrike all the faculties of the ſoul, and when we ſhall be employed ſolely in comparing what we have really done, with what we ought to have done, then will the voice of conſcience reaſſume its tone and ſtrength; then will that pure delight, which ariſes from a conſciouſneſs of virtue, and the bitter regret of having debaſed ourſelves by vice, determine the lot which is ſeverally prepared for us. Aſk me not, my good friend, if there may not be ſome other cauſes of future happineſs and miſery. I confeſs I am ignorant; theſe, however, which I conceive are ſufficient to conſole me under the inconveniences of this life, and give me hopes of another. I do not pretend to ſay that the virtuous will receive any peculiar rewards; for what other advantage can a Being, excellent in

its

its own nature expect than to exiſt in a manner agreeable to the excellence of its conſtitution? I dare affirm nevertheleſs that they will be happy; becauſe their Creator, the author of all juſtice, having given them ſenſibility cannot have made them to be miſerable; and, as they have not abuſed their liberty on earth, they have not perverted the deſign of their creation by their own fault: yet, as they have ſuffered evils in this life, they will certainly be indemnified in another. This opinion is not ſo much founded on the merits of man, as on the notion of that goodneſs which appears to me inſeparable from the divine nature. I only ſuppoſe the order of things ſtrictly maintained, and that the Deity is ever conſiſtent with himſelf.

It would be to as little purpoſe to aſk me whether the torments of the wicked will be eternal: Of this I am alſo equally ignorant, and have not the vain curioſity to perplex myſelf with ſuch uſeleſs diſquiſitions. What is it to me what becomes of the wicked? I intereſt myſelf very little in their deſtiny. I can never believe, however, that they will be condemned to everlaſting torments.

If ſupreme juſtice avenges itſelf on the wicked, it avenges itſelf on them here below. It is

you and your errors, ye nations! that are its miniſters of vengeance. It employs the evils you bring on each other, to puniſh the crimes for which you deſerve them. It is in the inſatiable hearts of mankind, corroding with envy, avarice, and ambition, that their avenging paſſions puniſh them for their vices; amidſt all the falſe appearances of proſperity. Where is the neceſſity of ſeeking a hell in another life, when it is to be found even in this, in the hearts of the wicked?

Where our momentary neceſſities or ſenſeleſs deſires have an end, there ought our paſſions and our vices to end alſo. Of what perverſity can pure ſpirits be ſuſceptible? As they ſtand in need of nothing, to what end ſhould they be vicious? If deſtitute of our groſſer ſenſes, all their happineſs conſiſts in the contemplation of things, they cannot be deſirous of any thing but good; and whoever ceaſes to be wicked, is it poſſible he ſhould be eternally miſerable? This is what I am inclined to believe on this head, without giving myſelf the trouble to determine poſitively concerning the matter.—O righteous and merciful Being! Whatever be thy decrees, I acknowlege their rectitude; if thou puniſheſt the wicked, my weak reaſon is dumb before thy juſtice. But, if the remorſe of theſe

unfortunate

unfortunate wretches is to have an end, if the ſame fate is one day to attend us all, my ſoul exults in thy praiſe. Is not the wicked man, after all, my brother? How often have I been tempted to reſemble him in partaking of his vices. O, may he be delivered from his miſery; may he caſt off alſo, that malignity which accompanies it; may he be ever happy as myſelf; ſo far from exciting my jealouſy, his happineſs will only add to mine.

It is thus that contemplating God in his works, and ſtudying him in thoſe attributes which it imports me to know, I learn by degrees to extend that imperfect and confined idea I at firſt formed of the ſupreme Being. But, if this idea becomes thus more grand and noble, it is proportionably leſs adapted to the weakneſs of the human underſtanding. In proportion, as my mind approaches eternal light, its lightneſs dazzles and confounds me; ſo that I am forced to give up all thoſe mean and earthly images which aſſiſt my imagination. God is no longer a corporeal and preceptible Being: the ſupreme Intelligence which governs the world, is no longer the world itſelf: but in vain I endeavour to raiſe my thoughts to a conception of his eſſence. When I reflect that it is he who gives life and activity to that living and active ſubſtance,

ſtance, which moves and governs animated bodies; when I am told that my ſoul is a ſpiritual Being, and that God alſo is a ſpirit, I am incenſed at this debaſement of the divine eſence, as if God and my ſoul were of the ſame nature, as if God was not the only abſolute, the only truly active Being, perceiving, thinking and willing of himſelf, from whom his creatures derive thought, activity, will, liberty and exiſtence We are free only becauſe it is his will that we ſhould be ſo; his inexplicable ſubſtance being, with reſpect to our ſouls, ſuch as our ſouls are in regard to our bodies. I know nothing of his having created matter, bodies, ſpirits, or the world. The idea of creation confounds me and ſurpaſſes my conception, though I believe as much of it as I am able to conceive: but I know that he hath formed the univerſe, and all that exiſts in the moſt conſummate order. God is doubtleſs eternal, but I am incapacitated to conceive an idea of eternity. Why then ſhould I amuſe myſelf with words? All that I conceive is, that he exiſted before all things, that he exiſts with them, and will exiſt after them, if they ſhould ever have an end. That a Being, whoſe eſſence is inconceivable, ſhould give exiſtence to other beings, is at beſt obſcure and incomprehenſible to our ideas; but that ſomething and nothing ſhould be reciprocally converted

verted into each other, is a palpable contradiction, a moſt manifeſt abſurdity.

God is intelligent; but in what manner? Man is intelligent by the act of reaſoning, but the ſupreme intelligence lies under no neceſſity to reaſon. He requires neither premiſes, nor conſequences; not even the ſimple form of a propoſition: his knowledge is purely intuitive; he beholds equally what is and will be; all truths are to him as one idea, as all places are but one point, and all times one moment. Human power acts by the uſe of means, the divine power in and of itſelf. God is powerful becauſe he is willing, his will conſtituting his power. God is good, nothing is more manifeſt than this truth; goodneſs in man, however, conſiſts in a love to his fellow-creatures, and the goodneſs of God in a love of order: for it is on ſuch order that the connection and preſervation of all things depend. Again, God is juſt; this I am fully convinced of, as it is the natural conſequence of his goodneſs. The injuſtice of men is their own work, not his; and that moral diſorder, which, in the judgment of ſome philoſophers, makes againſt the ſyſtem of providence, is in mine the ſtrongeſt argument for it. Juſtice in man, indeed, is to render every one his due;

but the juſtice of God requires, at the hands of every one, an account of the talents with which he has entruſted them.

In the diſcovery, however, by the force of reaſon, of thoſe divine attributes, of which I have no abſolute idea, I only affirm what I do not clearly comprehend, which is in effect to affirm nothing. I may ſay, it is true that God is this or that; I may be ſenſible of it, and fully convinced within myſelf that he is ſo, I am yet never the better able to conceive how, or in what manner, he ſo is.

In ſhort, the greater efforts I make to contemplate his infinite eſſence, the leſs I am able to conceive it: But I am certain that he is, and that is ſufficient; the more he ſurpaſſes my conceptions, the more I adore him. I humble myſelf before him, and ſay, "Being of beings, I am, "becauſe thou art; to meditate continually on "thee, is to elevate my thoughts to the fountain "of exiſtence. The moſt meritorious uſe of my "reaſon is to be annihilated before thee: it is "the delight of my ſoul, to feel my weak facul-"ties overcome by the ſplendor of thy greatneſs."

After having thus deduced, from the impreſſions of perceptible objects, and that innate principle which leads me to judge of natural

cauſes

cauſes from experience, the moſt important truth; it remains for me to enquire what maxims I ought to draw from them, for my conduct in life, what rules I ought to preſcribe to myſelf, in order to fulfil my deſtination on earth, agreeable to the deſign of him who placed me here. To purſue my own method, I deduce not theſe rules from the ſublime principles of philoſophy; but find them written in indelible characters on my heart. I have only to conſult myſelf concerning what I ought to do; all that I feel to be right, is right; whatever I feel to be wrong, is wrong: conſcience is the ableſt of all caſuiſts, and it is only when we are trafficking with her, that we have recourſe to the ſubtilties of logical ratiocination. The chief of our concerns is that of ourſelves; yet how often have we not been told by the monitor within, that to purſue our own intereſt at the expence of others would be to do wrong! we imagine thus, that we are ſometimes obeying the impulſe of nature, and we are all the while reſiſting it: In liſtening to the voice of our ſenſes, we turn a deaf ear to the dictates of our hearts, the active Being obeys, the paſſive Being commands. Conſcience is the voice of the ſoul, the paſſions are the voice of the body. Is it ſurprizing that theſe two voices ſhould ſometimes contradict each other; or can it be doubted,

when they do, which ought to be obeyed? Reaſon deceives us but too often, and has given us a right to diſtruſt her concluſions; but conſcience never deceives us. She is man's trueſt and ſafeſt guide; conſcience is in the ſoul, what inſtinct is in the body.* Whoever puts himſelf

* Modern philoſophy, which affects to admit of nothing but what it can explain, hath nevertheleſs very unadviſedly admitted of that obſcure faculty, called inſtinct, which appears to direct animals to the purpoſes of their being, without any acquiſition of knowledge. Inſtinct, according to one of our greateſt philoſophers, is a habit deſtitute of reflection, but acquired by reflecting: thus from the manner in which he explains its progreſs, we are led to conclude that children reflect more than grown perſons; a paradox ſingular enough to require ſome examination. Without entering, however, into the diſcuſſion of it at preſent, I would only aſk what name I am to give to that eagerneſs which my dog ſhews to purſue a mole, for inſtance, which he does not eat when he has caught it; to that patience with which he ſtands watching for them whole hours, and to that expertneſs with which he makes them a prey the moment they reach the ſurface of the earth; and that in order only to kill them, without ever having been trained to mole-hunting, or having been taught that moles were beneath the ſpot? I would aſk farther, as more important, why the firſt time I threaten the ſame dog, he throws himſelf down with his back to the ground, and his feet raiſed in a ſuppliant attitude, the moſt proper of all others to excite my compaſſion, an attitude in which he would not long remain, if I were ſo obdurate as to beat him lying in ſuch a poſture? Is it poſſible

ſelf under the conduct of this guide, purſues the direct path of nature, and need not fear to be miſled. This point is very important (purſued my benefactor, perceiving I was going to interrupt him) permit me to detain you a little longer in order, to clear it up.

All the morality of our actions lies in the judgment we ourſelves form of them. If virtue be any thing real, it ought to be the ſame in our hearts as in our actions; and one of the firſt rewards of juſtice, is to be conſcious of our putting it in practice. If moral goodneſs be agreeable to our nature, a man cannot be ſound of mind, or perfectly conſtituted, unleſs he be good. On the contrary if it be not ſo, and man is naturally wicked, he cannot become good without a corruption of his nature; goodneſs being evi-

 dently

poſſible that a young puppy can have already acquired moral ideas? Can he have any notion of clemency and generoſity? What experience can encourage him to hope he ſhall appeaſe me, by giving himſelf up to my mercy? Almoſt all dogs do nearly the ſame thing in the ſame circumſtances, nor do I advance any thing here of which every one may not convince himſelf. Let the philoſophers, who reject ſo diſdainfully the term inſtinct, explain this fact merely by operation of our ſenſes, and the knowledge thereby acquired; let them explain it, I ſay, in a manner ſatisfactory to any perſon of common ſenſe, and I have no more to ſay in favour of inſtinct.

dently contrary to his conſtitution. Formed for the deſtruction of his fellow-creatures, as the wolf to devour its prey, an humane and compaſſionate man, would be as depraved an animal as a meek and lamb-like wolf, while virtue only would leave behind it the ſtings of remorſe.

Let us examine ourſelves, my young friend, all partiality apart, and ſee which way our inclinations tend. Which is moſt agreeable to us, to contemplate the happineſs or the miſeries of others? Which is moſt pleaſing for us to do, and leaves the moſt agreeable reflection behind it, an act of benevolence or of miſchief? For whom are we the moſt deeply intereſted at our theatres? Do you take a pleaſure in acts of villainy? or do you ſhed tears at ſeeing the authors of them brought to condign puniſhment? It has been ſaid that every thing is indifferent to us in which we are not intereſted: the contrary however, is certain, as the ſoothing endearments of friendſhip and humanity conſole us under affliction; and even in our pleaſures we ſhould be too ſolitary, too miſerable, if we had nobody to partake them with us. If there be nothing moral in the heart of man, whence ariſe thoſe tranſports of admiration and eſteem we entertain for heroic actions, and great minds? What has this virtuous enthuſiaſm to do with our private intereſt

reſt? Wherefore do I rather wiſh to be an expiring Cato, than a triumphant Cæſar? Deprive our hearts of a natural affection for the ſublime and beautiful, and you deprive us of all the pleaſures of life. The man, whoſe meaner paſſions have ſtifled, in his narrow ſoul, ſuch delightful ſentiments; he, who, by dint of concentrating all his affections within himſelf, hath arrived at the pitch of having no regard for any one elſe, is no longer capable of ſuch tranſports; his frozen heart never flutters with joy; no ſympathetic tenderneſs brings the tears into his eyes; he is incapable of enjoyment; the unhappy wretch is void of ſenſibility: he is already dead.

But how great ſoever may be the number of the wicked; there are but few of theſe cadaverous ſouls, but few perſons ſo inſenſible, if their own intereſt be ſet aſide, to what is juſt and good. Iniquity never pleaſes unleſs we profit by it; in every other caſe it is natural for us to deſire the protection of the innocent. Do we ſee, for inſtance, an act of injuſtice or violence committed in the ſtreet, or on the highway; an emotion of reſentment and indignation immediately riſes in the heart, and incites us to ſtand up in defence of the injured or oppreſſed: but a more powerful conſideration reſtrains us, and

the laws deprive individuals of the right of taking upon themſelves to avenge inſulted innocence. On the contrary, if we happen to be witneſſes to any act of compaſſion or generoſity, with what admiration, with what eſteem are we inſtantly inſpired! Who is there that doth not, on ſuch an accaſion, ſay to himſelf, would I had done as much! It is certainly of very little conſequence to us whether a man was good or bad who lived two thouſand years ago; and yet we are as much affected in this reſpect, by the relations we meet with in ancient hiſtory, as if the tranſactions recorded had happened in our own times. Of what hurt is the wickedneſs of a Cataline to me? Am I afraid of falling a victim to his villainy? Wherefore then, do I look upon him with the ſame horror as if he was my cotemporary? We do not hate the wicked only becauſe their vices are hurtful, but alſo becauſe they are wicked. We are not only deſirous of happineſs for ourſelves, but alſo of the happineſs of others; and when that happineſs does not diminiſh ours, it neceſſarily increaſes it. In a word, we cannot help ſympathizing with the unfortunate, and always ſuffer when we are witneſſes to their miſery. The moſt perverſe natures cannot be altogether diveſted of this ſympathy; though we ſee it frequently makes them act in contradiction to themſelves.

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The robber who ſtrips the paſſenger on the highway, will frequently diſtribute his ſpoils, to cover the nakedneſs of the poor, and the moſt barbarous aſſaſſin may be induced humanely to ſupport a man falling into a fit.

We hear daily of the cries of remorſe, and the goadings of conſcience for ſecret crimes; and ſee remarkable inſtances of their frequently bringing them to light. Alas! who is a total ſtranger to this importunate voice? We ſpeak of it from experience, and would be glad to ſilence ſo diſagreeable a monitor. But let us be obedient to Nature; we know that her government is ever mild and gracious; and that nothing is more agreeable than that teſtimony of a good conſcience, which ever follows our obſervance of her laws. The wicked man is afraid of, and ſhuns himſelf; he turns his eyes on every ſide, in ſearch of objects to amuſe him; without an opportunity for ſatire and raillery, he would be always ſad: his only pleaſure lies in mockery and inſult. On the contrary, the ſerenity of the juſt is internal, his ſmiles are not thoſe of malignity but of joy: The ſource of them is found in himſelf, and he is as chearful when alone, as in the midſt of an aſſembly: he derives not contentment from thoſe who approach him, but communicates it to them.

Caſt your eye over the ſeveral nations of the world, take a retroſpective view of their hiſtories. Amidſt all the many inhuman and abſurd forms of worſhip, amidſt all that prodigious diverſity of manners and characters, you will every-where find the ſame ideas of juſtice and honeſty, the ſame notions of good and evil. Ancient paganiſm adopted the moſt abominable deities, which it would have puniſhed on earth as infamous criminals; deities that preſented no other picture of ſupreme happineſs, than the commiſſion of crimes and the gratification of their paſſions. But vice, armed even with ſacred authority, deſcended in vain on earth; moral inſtinct influenced the human heart to revolt againſt it. Even in celebrating the debaucheries of Jupiter, the world admired and reſpected the continence of Zenocrates; the chaſte Lucretia adored the impudent Venus; the intrepid Roman ſacrificed to Fear; they invoked the God who diſabled his father, and yet died without murmuring by the hand of theirs; the moſt contemptible divinities were adored by the nobleſt of men. The voice of nature more powerful than that of the Gods, made itſelf reſpected on earth, and ſeemed to have baniſhed vice to Heaven.

There evidently exiſts, therefore, in the ſoul of man, an innate principle of juſtice and goodneſs;

neſs; by which, in ſpite of our own maxims, we approve or condemn the actions of ourſelves and others: to this principle it is that I give the appellation of conſcience.

At this word, however, I hear the clamour of our pretended philoſophers; who all exclaim about the miſtakes of infancy, and the prejudices of education. There is nothing, they ſay, in the human mind but what is inſtilled by experience; nor can we judge of anything but from the ideas we have acquired. Nay, they go farther, and venture to reject the univerſal ſenſe of all nations; ſeeking ſome obſcure example known only to themſelves, to controvert this ſtriking uniformity in the judgment of mankind: as if all the natural inclinations of man were annihilated by the depravation of one people, and as if when monſters appeared the ſpecies itſelf were extinct. But what end did it ſerve to the ſceptical Montaigne, to take ſo much trouble to diſcover, in an obſcure corner of the world, a cuſtom oppoſed to the common notions of juſtice? What end did it anſwer for him to place a confidence in the moſt ſuſpicious travellers, which he refuſed to the moſt celebrated writers? Should a few whimſical and uncertain cuſtoms, founded on local motives unknown to us, invalidate a general

neral induction, drawn from the united concurrence of all nations, contradicting each other in every other point, and agreeing only in this? You pique yourſelf, Montaigne, on being ingenuous and ſincere; give us a proof, if it be in the power of a philoſopher, of your frankneſs and veracity: tell me if there be any country upon earth, in which it is deemed a crime to be ſincere, compaſſionate, beneficent and generous; in which an honeſt man is deſpicable, and knavery held in eſteem?

It is pretended that every one contributes to the public good for his own intereſt; but whence comes it that the virtuous man contributes to it, to his prejudice? Can a man lay down his life for his own intereſt? It is certain all our actions are influenced by a view to our own good; but unleſs we take moral good into the account, none but the actions of the wicked can be ever explained by motives of private intereſt. We imagine, indeed, no more will be attempted; as that would be too abominable a kind of philoſophy, by which we ſhould be puzzled to account for virtuous actions; or could extricate ourſelves out of the difficulty only by attributing them to baſe deſigns and ſiniſter views, by debaſing a Socrates and calumniating a Regulus. If ever ſuch doctrines ſhould take

riſe among us, the voice of nature as well as of reaſon would check their growth, and leave not even one of thoſe who inculcate them the ſimple excuſe of being ſincere.

It is not my deſign here to enter into ſuch metaphyſical inveſtigations, as ſurpaſs both your capacity and mine, and which in fact are uſeleſs. I have already told you I would not talk philoſophy to you, but only aſſiſt you to conſult your own heart. Were all the philoſophers in Europe to prove me in the wrong, yet, if you were ſenſible I was in the right, I ſhould deſire nothing more.

To this end you need only to diſtinguiſh between our acquired ideas, and our natural ſentiments, for we are ſenſible before we are intelligent; and, as we do not learn to deſire our own good and to avoid what is evil, but poſſeſs this deſire immediately from nature, ſo the love of virtue and hatred of vice, are as natural as the love of ourſelves. The operations of conſcience are not intellectual, but ſentimental; for tho' all our ideas are acquired from without, the ſentiments which eſtimate them ariſe from within; and it is by theſe alone, that we know the agreement or diſagreement which exiſts between us and thoſe things which we ought to ſeek or ſhun,

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To exiſt is, with us, to be ſenſible; our ſenſibility is inconteſtably prior to our intelligence, and we were poſſeſſed of ſentiment before we formed ideas. Whatever was the cauſe of our Being, it hath provided for our preſervation in furniſhing us with ſentiments agreeable to our conſtitution, nor can it poſſibly be denied that theſe at leaſt are innate. Theſe ſentiments are in the individual, the love of himſelf, averſion to pain, dread of death, and the deſire of happineſs. But if, as it cannot be doubted, man is by nature a ſocial Being, or at leaſt formed to become ſuch, his ſociability abſolutely requires that he ſhould be furniſhed with other innate ſentiments relative to his ſpecies: for to conſider only the phyſical wants of men, it would certainly be better for them to be diſperſed than aſſembled.

Now it is from this moral ſyſtem, formed by its duplicate relation to himſelf and his fellow-creatures, that the impulſe of conſcience ariſes. To know what is virtuous, is not to love virtue. Man has no innate knowledge of virtue, but no ſooner is it made known to him by reaſon, than conſcience induces him to love and admire it: this is the innate ſentiment I mean.

I cannot think it impoſſible, therefore, to explain, from natural conſequences, the immediate principle of conſcience independent of reaſon; and, though it were impoſſible, it is not at all neceſſary; for ſince thoſe who reject this principle (admitted however, and acknowledged in general by all mankind) do not prove its non-exiſtence, but content themſelves with affirming it only: when we affirm that it doth exiſt, we ſtand at leaſt on as good a footing as they; and have beſides that internal teſtimony for us, the voice of conſcience depoſing in behalf of itſelf. If the firſt glimmerings of the underſtanding dazzle our ſight and make objects appear at firſt obſcure or confuſed, let us wait but a little while till our optics recover themſelves and gather ſtrength, and we ſhall preſently ſee thoſe ſame objects, by the light of reaſon, to be ſuch as nature at firſt preſented them: or rather, let us be more ſimple and leſs vain; let us confine ourſelves to the ſentiments we firſt diſcovered, as it is to theſe our well-regulated ſtudies muſt always recur.

O Conſcience! Conſcience! thou divine inſtinct, thou certain guide of an ignorant and confined, though intelligent and free, Being; thou infallible judge of good and evil, who makeſt man to reſemble the Deity; in thee conſiſt

ſiſt the excellence of our nature and the morality of our actions: without thee I perceive nothing in myſelf that ſhould elevate me above the brutes, except the melancholy privilege of wandering from error to error, by the aſſiſtance of an ungovernable underſtanding and unprincipled reaſon.

Thank Heaven, we are delivered from this formidable apparatus of philoſophy: we can be men without being ſages; without ſpending our days in the ſtudy of morality, we poſſeſs, at a cheaper rate, a more certain guide through the immenſe and perplexing labyrinth of human opinions. It is not enough, however, that ſuch a guide exiſts, it is neceſſary to know and follow him. If he ſpeaks to all hearts, it may be ſaid how comes it that ſo few underſtand him? It is, alas! becauſe he ſpeaks to us in the language of nature, which every thing conſpires to make us forget. Conſcience is timid, ſhe loves peace and retirement; the world and its noiſe terrify her: the prejudices ſhe has been compelled to give riſe to, are her moſt cruel enemies, before whom ſhe is ſilent, or avoids their preſence; their louder voice entirely overpowers hers, and prevents her being heard; fanaticiſm counterfeits her nature, and dictates in her name the greateſt of crimes. Thus, from being often rejected,

rejected, ſhe at length ceaſes to ſpeak to us, and anſwers not our enquiries; after being long held in contempt, alſo, it coſts us as much trouble to recall, as it did at firſt to baniſh her from our boſoms.

How often have I found myſelf fatigued in my reſearches, from my indifference! How often hath uneaſineſs and diſguſt, poiſoning my meditations, rendered them inſupportable! My inſenſible heart was ſuſceptible only of a luke-warm and languiſhing zeal for truth. I ſaid to myſelf, why ſhould I take the trouble to ſeek after things that have no exiſtence? Virtue is a mere chimera, nor is there any thing deſireable but the pleaſures of ſenſe. When a man hath once loſt a taſte for the pleaſures of the mind, how difficult to recover it! How much more difficult is it alſo for one to acquire ſuch a taſte, who never poſſeſſed it! If there be in the world a man ſo miſerable as never to have done an action in his life, the remembrance of which muſt make him ſatisfied with himſelf, that man muſt be ever incapable of ſuch a taſte; and, for want of being able to perceive that goodneſs which is conformable to his nature, muſt of neceſſity remain wicked as he is, and eternally miſerable. But can you believe there exiſts on earth an human creature ſo depraved

depraved as never to have given up his heart to the inclination of doing good? The temptation is ſo natural and ſeductive, that it is impoſſible always to reſiſt it, and the remembrance of the pleaſure it hath once given us, is ſufficient to repreſent it to us ever afterwards. Unhappily this propenſity is at firſt difficult to gratify; there are a thouſand reaſons for our not complying with the dictates of our hearts; the falſe prudence of the world confines our good inclinations to ourſelves, and all our fortitude is neceſſary to caſt off the yoke. To take a pleaſure in virtue is the reward of having been virtuous, nor is this prize to be obtained till it be merited. Nothing is more amiable than virtue, but we muſt poſſeſs it, in order to find it ſuch. When we court at firſt its embraces, it aſſumes, like Proteus in the fable, a thouſand terrifying forms, and diſplays at laſt, its own, only to thoſe who are tenacious of their hold.

Wavering perpetually between my natural ſentiments, tending to the general good of mankind, and my reaſon, confining every thing to my own, I ſhould have remained all my life in this continual dilemma, doing evil yet loving good, in conſtant contradiction with myſelf, had not new knowledge enlightened my heart; had not the truth, which determined my opinions;

nions, aſcertained alſo my conduct, and rendered me conſiſtent. It is in vain to attempt the eſtabliſhment of virtue on the foundation of reaſon alone; what ſolidity is there in ſuch a caſe? Virtue, it is ſaid, is the love of order; but can, or ought, this love of order, to prevail over that of my own happineſs? Let there be given me a clear and ſufficient reaſon for my giving it the preference. This pretended principle is, at the bottom, only a mere play upon words; as I may as well ſay, that vice alſo conſiſts in the love of order taken in a different ſenſe. There is ſome kind of moral order in every thing that has ſentiment and intelligence. The difference is, that a good Being regulates himſelf according to the general order of things, and a wicked Being, regulates things agreeable to his own private intereſt: the latter makes himſelf the centre of all things, and the former meaſures his radius and diſpoſes himſelf in the circumference. Here he is arranged, with reſpect to the common centre, as God, and with reſpect to all concentric circles, as his fellow-creatures. If there be no God, the wicked man only reaſons right, the good man is a meer fool.

O my child! may you be one day ſenſible how great a weight we are relieved from, when, having exhauſted the vanity of human opinions, and

and tasted of the bitterness of the passions, we see ourselves at last so near the path to wisdom; the reward of our good actions, and the source of that happiness we had despaired to attain. Every duty prescribed by the laws of nature, though almost effaced from my heart by the injustice of mankind, again revived at the name of that eternal justice, which imposed them, and was a witness to my discharge of them. I see in myself nothing more than the work and instrument of a superior Being, desirous of, and doing good; desirous also of effecting mine, by the concurrence of my will to his own, and by my making a right use of my liberty. I acquiesce in the regularity and order he hath established, being certain of enjoying one day or other that order in myself, and of finding my happiness therein: for what can afford greater felicity than to perceive one's self making a part of a system, where every thing is constructed aright? On every occasion of pain or sorrow, I support them with patience, reflecting that they are transitory, and that they are derived from a body which is detached from myself. If I do a good action in secret, I know that it is nevertheless seen, and make the consideration of another life, the rule of my conduct in this. If I am ever dealt with unjustly, I say to myself, that just Being who governs all things, knows how

how to indemnify me. My corporeal neceſſities, and the miſeries inſeparable from this mortal life, make the apprehenſions of death more ſupportable. I have hence ſo many chains the leſs to break when I am obliged to quit this mortal ſcene.

For what reaſon my ſoul is thus ſubjected to my organs of ſenſe, and chained to a body which lays it under ſo much reſtraint, I know not; nor preſume to enter into the decrees of the Almighty. But, I may without temerity form a modeſt conjecture or two on this head. I reflect that, if the mind of man had remained perfectly free and pure, what merit could he have pretended to, in admiring and purſuing that order which he ſaw already eſtabliſhed and which he would lie under no temptation to diſturb? It is true he would have been happy, but he could not have attained that moſt ſublime degree of felicity, the glory of virtue and the teſtimony of a good conſcience; we ſhould in ſuch a caſe have been no better than the angels, and without doubt a virtuous man will be one day much ſuperior. Being united on earth to a mortal body, by ties not leſs powerful than incomprehenſible, the preſervation of that body becomes the great concern of the ſoul, and makes its preſent apparent intereſts contrary

to the general order of things, which it is nevertheleſs capable of ſeeing and admiring. It is in this ſituation, that the making a good uſe of his liberty becomes at once his merit and his reward; and that he prepares for himſelf eternal happineſs, in combating his earthly paſſions and preſerving the primitive purity of his will.

But even ſuppoſing that in our preſent ſtate of depravity, our primitive propenſities were ſuch as they ought to be, yet if all our vices are derived from ourſelves, why do we complain that we are ſubjected by them? Why do we impute to the Creator thoſe evils which we bring on ourſelves, and thoſe enemies we arm againſt our own happineſs? Ah! let us not ſpoil the man of nature, and he will always be virtuous without conſtraint and happy without remorſe! The criminals, who pretend they are compelled to ſin, are as falſe as they are wicked: is it poſſible for them not to ſee that the weakneſs they complain of, is their own work; that their firſt depravation was owing to their own will; that by their wilfully yielding at firſt to temptations, they at length find them irreſiſtable? It is true, they now cannot help their being weak and wicked; but it is their fault that they at firſt became ſo. How eaſily might men preſerve the maſtery over themſelves and their

their paſſions, even during life, if, before their vicious habits are acquired, when the faculties of the mind are juſt beginning to be diſplayed, they ſhould employ themſelves on thoſe objects which it is neceſſary for them to know, in order to judge of thoſe which are unknown; if they were ſincerely deſirous of acquiring knowledge, not with a view to make a parade in the eyes of others, but in order to render themſelves wiſe, good, and happy, in the practice of their natural duties! This ſtudy appears difficult, becauſe we only apply to it, after being already corrupted by vice, and made ſlaves to our paſſions. We place our judgment and eſteem on objects before we arrive at the knowledge of good and evil, and then referring every thing to that falſe ſtandard, we hold nothing in its due eſtimation.

The heart, at a certain age, while it is yet free, arduous, reſtleſs and anxious after happineſs, is ever ſeeking it with an impatient and uncertain curioſity; when deceived by the ſenſes, it fixes on the ſhadow of it and imagines it to be found where it doth not exiſt. This illuſion hath prevailed too long with me. I diſcovered it, alas! too late; and have not been able entirely to remove it: No, it will remain with me as long as this mortal body, which gave

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gave riſe to it. It may prove as ſeductive, however, as it will, it can no longer deceive me. I know it for what it is, and even while I am miſled by it deſpiſe it. So far from eſteeming it an object of happineſs, I ſee it is an obſtacle to it. Hence, I long for that moment when I ſhall ſhake off this incumbrance of body, and be myſelf, without inconſiſtency or participation with matter, and ſhall depend on myſelf only to be happy. In the mean time, I make myſelf happy in this life, becauſe I hold the evils of life as trifling in themſelves; as almoſt foreign to my Being; and conceive at the ſame time that all the real good which may thence be deduced depends on myſelf.

To anticipate as much as poſſible that deſirable ſtate of happineſs, power and liberty, I exerciſe my mind in ſublime contemplations. I meditate on the order of the univerſe, not indeed with a view to explain it by vain ſyſtems, but to admire it perpetually, and to adore its all-wiſe Creator, whoſe features I trace in his workmanſhip. With him I am thus enabled to converſe, and to exert my faculties in the contemplation of his divine eſſence; I am affected by his beneficence, I praiſe him for his mercies, but never ſo far forget myſelf as to pray. For what ſhould I aſk of him? That he ſhould for my

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ſake pervert the order of things, and work miracles in my favour? Shall I who ought to love and admire above all things, that order which is eſtabliſhed by his wiſdom and maintained by his providence, deſire that ſuch order ſhould be broken for me? No, ſuch a raſh petition would rather merit puniſhment than acceptance. Nor can I pray to him for the power of acting aright: for why ſhould I petition for what he hath already given me? Has he not given me conſcience to love virtue, reaſon to know what it is, and liberty to make it my choice? If I do evil I have no excuſe, I do it becauſe I will; to deſire him to change my will, is to require that of him which he requires of me: this would be to deſire him to do my work, while I receive the reward. Not to be content with my ſituation in the order of things, is to deſire to be no longer a man; it is to wiſh things were otherwiſe conſtituted than they are, to wiſh for evil and diſorder. No, thou ſource of juſtice and truth, God! merciful and juſt! placing my confidence in thee, the chief deſire of my heart is, that thy will be done. By rendering my will conformable to thine, I act as thou doſt, I acquieſce in thy goodneſs, and conceive myſelf already a partaker of that ſupreme felicity, which is its reward.

The only thing which, under a juſt diffidence

of myſelf, I requeſt of him, or rather expect from his juſtice, is that he will correct my errors when I go aſtray. To be ſincere, however, I do not think my judgment infallible: Such of my opinions, as ſeem to be the beſt founded, may nevertheleſs be falſe; for what man hath not his opinions, and how few are there who agree in every thing? It is to no purpoſe that the illuſions by which I am miſled ariſe from myſelf; it is he alone can diſſipate them. I have done every thing in my power to arrive at truth; but its ſource is elevated beyond my reach: if my faculties fail me, in what am I culpable? It is neceſſary for truth to ſtoop to my capacity."

THE GOOD PRIEST ſpoke with ſome earneſtneſs; he was moved, and I was alſo greatly affected. I imagined myſelf attending to the divine Orpheus, ſinging his hymns and teaching mankind the worſhip of the Gods. A number of objections, however, to what he had ſaid, ſuggeſted themſelves; though I did not urge one, becauſe they were leſs ſolid than perplexing; and though not convinced, I was nevertheleſs perſuaded he was in the right. In proportion as he ſpoke to me from the conviction of his own conſcience, mine confirmed me in the truth of what he ſaid.

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The ſentiments you have been delivering, ſaid I to him, appear newer to me in what you confeſs yourſelf ignorant of, than in what you profeſs to believe. I ſee in the latter nearly that theiſm or natural religion, which Chriſtians affect to confound with atheiſm and impiety, though in fact diametrically oppoſite. In the preſent ſituation of my mind, I find it difficult to adopt preciſely your opinions, and to be as wiſe as you. To be, at leaſt as ſincere, however, I will conſult my own conſcience on theſe points. It is that internal ſentiment which, according to your example, ought to be my conductor, and you have yourſelf taught me, that, after having impoſed ſilence on it, for a long time, it is not to be awakened again in a moment. I will treaſure up your diſcourſe in my heart, and meditate thereon. If, when I have duly weighed it, I am as much convinced as you, I will truſt you as my apoſtle, and will be your proſelyte till death. Go on, however, to inſtruct me: you have only informed me of half what I ought to know. Give me your thoughts of revelation, the ſcriptures, and thoſe myſterious doctrines, concerning which I have been in the dark from my infancy, without being able to conceive or believe them, and yet not knowing how either to admit or reject them.

Yes, my dear child, ſaid he, I will proceed to tell you what I think farther; I meant not to open to you my heart by halves: but the deſire which you expreſs to be informed in theſe particulars was neceſſary to authoriſe me to be totally without reſerve. I have hitherto told you nothing but what I thought might be uſeful to you, and in the truth of which I am moſt firmly perſuaded. The examination which I am now going to make, is very different; preſenting to my view nothing but perplexity, myſteriouſneſs and obſcurity: I enter on it therefore with diſtruſt and uncertainty; I almoſt tremble to determine about any thing, and ſhall rather inform you therefore of my doubts than of my opinions. Were your own ſentiments more confirmed, I ſhould heſitate to acquaint you with mine; but in your preſent ſceptical ſituation, you will be a gainer by thinking as I do. * Let my diſcourſe, however, carry with it no greater authority than that of reaſon; for I plainly confeſs myſelf ignorant, whether I am in the right or wrong. It is difficult, indeed, in all diſcuſſions, not to aſſume ſometimes an affirmative tone; but remember that all my affirmations, in treating theſe matters, are only ſo many rational doubts.

* This I conceive, is what the good curate means to ſay alſo to the public.

doubts. I leave you to inveſtigate the truth of them; on my part, I can only promiſe to be ſincere.

You will find my expoſition treat of nothing more than natural religion: it is very ſtrange that we ſhould ſtand in need of any other! By what means can I find out ſuch neceſſity? In what reſpect can I be culpable, for ſerving God agreeably to the dictates of the underſtanding he hath given me, and the ſentiments he hath implanted in my heart? What purity of morals, what ſyſtem of faith uſeful to man, or honourable to his Creator, can I deduce from any poſitive doctrines, that I cannot deduce as well without it, from a good uſe of my natural faculties? Let any one ſhew me what can be added, either for the glory of God, the good of ſociety, or my own advantage, to the obligations we are laid under by nature; let him ſhew me what virtue can be produced from any new worſhip, which is not alſo the conſequence of mine. The moſt ſublime ideas of the Deity are inculcated by reaſon alone. Take a view of the works of nature, liſten to the voice within, and then tell me what God hath omitted to ſay to your ſight, your conſcience, your underſtanding? Where are the men who can tell us more of him than he thus tells us of himſelf? Their re-

velations only debaſe the Deity, in aſcribing to him human paſſions. So far from giving us enlightened notions of the ſupreme Being, their particular tenets, in my opinion, give us the moſt obſcure and confuſed ideas. To the inconceivable myſteries by which the Deity is hid from our view, they add the moſt abſurd contradictions. They ſerve to make man proud, perſecuting and cruel; inſtead of eſtabliſhing peace on earth, they bring fire and ſword. I aſk myſelf to what good purpoſe tends all this, without being able to reſolve the queſtion. Artificial religion preſents to my view only the wickedneſs and miſeries of mankind.

I am told, indeed, that revelation is neceſſary to teach mankind the manner in which God would be ſerved; as a proof of this, they bring the diverſity of whimſical modes of worſhip which prevail in the world; and that without remarking that this very diverſity ariſes from the whim of adopting revelations. Ever ſince men have taken it into their heads to make the Deity ſpeak, every people make him ſpeak in their own way, and ſay what they like beſt. Had they liſtened only to what the Deity hath ſaid to their hearts, there would have been but one religion on earth.

It is neceſſary that the worſhip of God ſhould be uniform, I would have it ſo: but is this a point ſo very important, that the whole apparatus of divine power was neceſſary to eſtabliſh it? Let us not confound the ceremonials of religion with religion itſelf. The worſhip of God demands that of the heart; and this, when it is ſincere, is ever uniform; men muſt entertain very ridiculous notions of the Deity, indeed, if they imagine he can intereſt himſelf in the gown or caſſock of a prieſt, in the order of words he pronounces, or in the geſtures and genuflections he makes at the altar. Alas! my friend, where is the uſe of kneeling? Stand as upright as you will, you will be always near enough the earth. God requires to be worſhipped in ſpirit and in truth: this is a duty incumbent on men of all religions and countries. With regard to exterior forms, if, for the ſake of peace and good order, their uniformity be expedient, it is merely an affair of government; the adminiſtration of which ſurely requires not the aid of revelation.

I did not ſet out, at firſt, with theſe reflections. Hurried on by the prejudices of education, and by that dangerous ſelf-conceit, which ever elates mankind above their ſphere, as I

could not raiſe my feeble conceptions to the ſupreme Being, I endeavoured to debaſe him to my ideas. Thus I connected relations infinitely diſtant from each other, comparing the incomprehenſible nature of the Deity with my own. I required ſtill farther a more immediate communication with the Divinity, and more particular inſtructions concerning his will: not content with reducing God to a ſimilitude with man, I wanted to be farther diſtinguiſhed by his favour, and to enjoy ſupernatural lights: I longed for an excluſive and peculiar privilege of adoration, and that God ſhould have revealed to me what he had kept ſecret from others, or that others ſhould not underſtand his revelations ſo well as myſelf.

Looking on the point at which I was arrived, as that whence all believers ſet out, in order to reach an enlightened mode of worſhip, I regarded natural religion only as the elements of all religion. I took a ſurvey of that variety of ſects which are ſcattered over the face of the earth, and who mutually accuſe each other of falſhood and error: I aſked which of them was the right? Every one of them in their turns anſwered *theirs*. I and my partizans only think truly; all the reſt are miſtaken. *But, how do you know that your ſect is in the right?* Becauſe God

God hath declared ſo. *And who tells you God hath declared ſo?* My ſpiritual guide, who knows it well. My paſtor tells me to believe ſo and ſo, and accordingly I believe it: he aſſures me that every one who ſays to the contrary, ſpeaks falſly; and therefore I liſten to nobody who controverts his doctrine. †.

How, thought I, is not the truth every where the ſame? Is it poſſible that what is true with one perſon can be falſe with another? If the method taken by him who is in the right, and by him who is in the wrong, be the ſame, what

† All of them, ſays a certain wiſe and good prieſt, pretend that they derive their doctrines not from men, nor from any created Being; but from God. But to ſay truth, without flattery or diſguiſe, there is nothing in ſuch pretenſions: however they may talk, they owe their religion to human means; witneſs the manner in which they firſt adopt it. The nation, country and place where they are born and bred determine it. Are we not circumciſed or baptiſed, made Jews, Turks or Chriſtians before we are men? Our religion is not the effect of choice: witneſs our lives and manners ſo little accordant to it; witneſs how we act contrary to the tenets of it, on the moſt trifling occaſions. *Charron, on Wiſdom.*

There is great reaſon to believe that a ſincere profeſſion of faith from the virtuous Divine of Candom, would have differed but little from that of our Savoyard curate.

merit or demerit hath the one more than the other? Their choice is the effect of accident, and to impute it to them is unjuſt: it is to reward or puniſh them for being born in this or that country. To ſay that the Deity can judge us in this manner, is the higheſt impeachment of his juſtice.

Now, either all religions are good and agreeable to God, or if there be one which he hath dictated to man, and will puniſh him for rejecting, he hath certainly diſtinguiſhed it by manifeſt ſigns and tokens, as the only true one. Theſe ſigns are common to all times and places, and are equally obvious to all mankind, to the young and old, the learned and ignorant, to Europeans, Indians, Africans and Savages. If there be only one religion in the world that can prevent our ſuffering eternal damnation, and there be on any part of the earth a ſingle mortal who is ſincere and is not convinced by its evidence, the God of that religion muſt be the moſt iniquitous and cruel of tyrants. Would we ſeek the truth therefore in ſincerity, we muſt lay no ſtreſs on the place and circumſtance of our birth, nor on the authority of fathers and teachers; but appeal to the dictates of reaſon and conſcience concerning every thing that is taught us in our youth. It is to no purpoſe

poſe to bid me ſubject my reaſon to the truth of things of which it is incapacitated to judge; the man who would impoſe on me a falſhood, may bid me do the ſame: it is neceſſary therefore I ſhould employ my reaſon even to know when it ought to ſubmit.

All the theology I am myſelf capable of acquiring, by taking a proſpect of the univerſe, and by the proper uſe of my faculties, is confined to what I have laid down above. To know more, we muſt have recourſe to extraordinary means. Theſe means cannot depend on the authority of men: for all men being of the ſame ſpecies with myſelf, whatever another can by natural means come to the knowledge of, I can do the ſame; and another man is as liable to be deceived as I am: when I believe therefore what he ſays, it is not becauſe he ſays it, but becauſe he proves it. The teſtimony of mankind therefore, is at the bottom that of my reaſon, and adds nothing to the natural means God hath given me for the diſcovery of the truth.

What then can even the apoſtle of truth have to tell me, of which I am not ſtill to judge? *But God himſelf hath ſpoken; liſten to the voice of revelation.* That indeed is another thing. God hath ſpoken! This is ſaying a great deal:

but to whom hath he ſpoken? *He hath ſpoken to man.* How comes it then that I heard nothing of it? *He hath appointed others to teach you his word.* I underſtand you: there are certain men who are to tell me what God hath ſaid. I had much rather have heard it from himſelf; this, had he ſo pleaſed, he could eaſily have done: and I ſhould then have run no riſk of deception. Will it be ſaid I am ſecured from that, by his manifeſting the miſſion of his meſſengers by miracles? Where are theſe miracles to be ſeen? are they related only in books? Pray who wrote theſe books? — Men. — Who were witneſſes to theſe miracles? Men. — Always human teſtimony! It is always men, that tell me what other men have told them. What a number of theſe are conſtantly between me and the Deity! We are always reduced to the neceſſity of examining, comparing and verifying ſuch evidence. O, that God had deigned to have ſaved me all this trouble! ſhould I have ſerved him with a leſs willing heart?

Conſider my friend, in what a terrible diſcuſſion I am already engaged; what immenſe erudition I ſtand in need of, to recur back to the earlieſt antiquity; to examine, to weigh, to confront prophecies, revelations, facts, with all the monuments of faith that have made their appearance in all the countries of the world; to aſcertain their time, place, authors and occaſi-

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ons. How great the critical ſagacity which is requiſite to enable me to diſtinguiſh between pieces that are ſuppoſititious, and thoſe which are authentic; to compare objections with their replies, tranſlations with their originals; to judge of the impartiality of witneſſes, of their good ſenſe, of their capacity; to know if nothing be ſuppreſſed or added to their teſtimony, if nothing be changed, tranſpoſed or falſified; to obviate the contradictions that remain, to judge what weight we ought to aſcribe to the ſilence of our opponents, in regard to facts alledged againſt them; to diſcover whether ſuch allegations were known to them; whether they did not diſdain them too much to make any reply; whether books were common enough for ours to reach them; or if we were honeſt enough to let them have a free circulation among us; and to leave their ſtrongeſt objections in full force.

Again, ſuppoſing all theſe monuments acknowledged to be inconteſtible, we muſt proceed to examine the proofs of the miſſion of their authors: it would be neceſſary for us to be perfectly acquainted with the laws of chance, and the doctrine of probabilities, to judge what prediction could not be accompliſhed without a miracle; to know the genius of the original languages, in order to diſtinguiſh what is predictive in theſe languages and what is only figurative.

rative. It would be requiſite for us to know what facts are agreeable to the eſtabliſhed order of nature, and what are not ſo; to be able to ſay how far an artful man may not faſcinate the eyes of the ſimple, and even aſtoniſh the moſt enlightened ſpectators; to know of what kind a miracle ſhould be, and the authenticity it ought to bear, not only to claim our belief, but to make it criminal to doubt it; to compare the proofs of falſe and true miracles, and diſcover the certain means of diſtinguiſhing them; and after all to tell why the Deity ſhould chuſe, in order to confirm the truth of his word, to make uſe of means which themſelves require ſo much confirmation, as if he took delight in playing upon the credulity of mankind, and had purpoſely avoided the direct means to perſuade them.

Suppoſe that the divine Majeſty hath really condeſcended to make man the organ of promulgating its ſacred will; is it reaſonable, is it juſt to require all mankind to obey the voice of ſuch a miniſter, without his making himſelf known to be ſuch? Where is the equity or propriety in furniſhing him, for univerſal credentials, with only a few particular tokens diſplayed before a handful of obſcure perſons, and of which all the reſt of mankind know nothing but

but by hearſay? In every country in the world, if we ſhould believe all the prodigies to be true which the common people, and the ignorant, affirm to have ſeen, every ſect would be in the right, there would be more miraculous events than natural ones; and the greateſt miracle of all would be to find that no miracles had happened where fanaticiſm had been perſecuted. The ſupreme Being is beſt diſplayed by the fix'd and unalterable order of nature: if there ſhould happen many exceptions to ſuch general laws, I ſhould no longer know what to think; and, for my own part, I muſt confeſs I believe too much in God to believe in ſo many miracles ſo little worthy of him.

What if a man ſhould come and harangue us in the following manner: "I come, ye "mortals, to announce to you the will of the "moſt high; acknowledge in my voice that of "him who ſent me. I command the ſun to "move backwards, the ſtars to change their "places, the mountains to diſappear, the "waves to remain fixed on high, and the "earth to wear a different aſpect." Who would not, at the ſight of ſuch miracles, immediately attribute them to the author of nature? Nature is not obedient to impoſtors; their miracles are always performed in the highways,

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in the fields, or in apartments where they are displayed before a small number of spectators, previously disposed to believe every thing they see. Who is there will venture to determine how many eye-witnesses are necessary to render a miracle worthy of credit? If the miracles, intended to prove the truth of your doctrine, stand themselves in need of proof, of what use are they? There might as well be none performed at all.

The most important examination after all, remains to be made into the truth of the doctrines delivered; for as those who say that God is pleased to work these miracles, pretend that the devil sometimes imitates them, we are not a jot nearer than before, though such miracles should be ever so well attested. As the magicians of Pharoah, worked the same miracles, even in the presence of Moses, as he himself performed by the express command of God, why might not they, in his absence, from the same proofs, pretend to the same authority? Thus after proving the truth of the doctrine by the miracle, you are reduced to prove the truth of the miracle by that of the doctrine, * lest the works

* This is expressly mentioned in many places in scripture, particularly in Deuteronomy, Chap. XIII. where

works of the devil ſhould be miſtaken for thoſe of the Lord. What think you of this alternative?

The doctrines, coming from God, ought to bear the ſacred characters of the divinity; and ſhould not only clear up thoſe confuſed ideas which

where it is ſaid that, if a prophet, teaching the worſhip of ſtrange Gods, confirm his diſcourſe by ſigns and wonders, and what he foretels comes really to paſs, ſo far from paying any regard to his miſſion, the people ſhould ſtone him to death. When the Pagans, therefore, put the Apoſtles to death, for preaching up to them the worſhip of a ſtrange God, proving their divine miſſion by prophecies and miracles, I ſee not what could be objected to them, which they might not with equal juſtice have retorted upon us. Now, what is to be done in this caſe? There is but one ſtep to be taken, to recur to reaſon and leave miracles to themſelves: better indeed had it been never to have had recourſe to them, nor to have perplexed good-ſenſe with ſuch a number of ſubtle diſtinctions. What do I talk of ſubtle diſtinctions in chriſtianity! If there are ſuch, Our Saviour was in the wrong ſurely to promiſe the Kingdom of Heaven to the weak and ſimple? How came he to begin his fine diſcourſe on the mount, with bleſſing the poor in ſpirit, if it requires ſo much ingenuity to comprehend and believe his doctrines? When you prove that I ought to ſubject my reaſon to his dictates, it is very well; but to prove that, you muſt render them intelligible to my underſtanding: you muſt adapt your arguments to the poverty of my genius, or I ſhall not acknowledge you to be the true diſciple of your Maſter, or think it is his doctrines which you would inculcate.

which unenlightened reaſon excites in the mind; but ſhould alſo furniſh us with a ſyſtem of religion and morals, agreeable to thoſe attributes by which only we form a conception of his eſſence. If then they teach us only abſurdities, if they inſpire us with ſentiments of averſion for our fellow-creatures, and fear for ourſelves; if they deſcribe the Deity as a vindictive, partial, jealous and angry Being; as a God of war and of battles, always ready to thunder and deſtroy; always threatening ſlaughter and revenge, and even boaſting of puniſhing the innocent, my heart cannot be incited to love ſo terrible a Deity, and I ſhall take care how I give up my natural religion to embrace ſuch doctrines. Your God is not mine, I ſhould ſay to the profeſſors of ſuch a religion. A Being, who began his diſpenſations with partially ſelecting one people, and proſcribing the reſt of mankind, is not the common father of the human race; a Being, who deſtines to eternal puniſhment the greateſt part of his creatures, is not that good and merciful God who is pointed out by my reaſon.

With regard to articles of faith, my reaſon tells me, they ſhould be clear, perſpicuous and evident. If natural religion be inſufficient, it is owing to the obſcurity in which it neceſſarily leaves

leaves thoſe ſublime truths it profeſſes to teach: it is the buſineſs of revelation to exhibit them to the mind in a more clear and ſenſible manner; to adapt them to his underſtanding, and to enable him to conceive, in order that he may be capable of believing them. True faith is aſſured and confirmed by the underſtanding, the beſt of all religions is undoubtedly the cleareſt: that which is clouded with myſteries and contradictions, the worſhip that is to be taught me by preaching, teaches me by that very circumſtance to diſtruſt it. The God whom I adore, is not a God of darkneſs; he hath not given me an underſtanding to forbid me the uſe of it. To bid me give up my reaſon, is to inſult the author of it. The miniſter of truth doth not tyranniſe over my underſtanding, he enlightens it.

We have ſet aſide all human authority, and without it I cannot ſee how one man can convince another, by preaching to him an unreaſonable doctrine. Let us ſuppoſe two perſons engaged in a diſpute on this head, and ſee how they will expreſs themſelves in the language generally made uſe of on ſuch occaſions.

DOGMATIST.

DOGMATIST.

" Your reaſon tells you that the whole is " greater than a part, but I tell you, from God, " that a part is greater than the whole."

RATIONALIST.

" And who are you, that dare to tell me " God contradicts himſelf? In whom ſhall I " rather believe? in him who inſtructs me, by " means of reaſon, in the knowledge of eter- " nal truths, or in you who would impoſe on " me, in his name, the greateſt abſurdity?"

DOGMATIST.

" In me, for my inſtructions are more po- " ſitive, and I will prove to you inconteſtibly, " that he hath ſent me."

RATIONALIST.

" How! will you prove that God hath ſent " you to depoſe againſt himſelf? What ſort of " proofs can you bring to convince me, it is " more certain that God ſpeaks by your " mouth than by the underſtanding he hath " given me?"

DOGMATIST.

" The underſtanding he hath given you! " Ridiculous and contemptible man! you talk " as if you were the firſt infidel, who ever " was miſled by an underſtanding depraved by " ſin."

RATIONALIST.

RATIONALIST.

"Nor may you, man of God! be the firſt "knave whoſe impudence hath been the only "proof he could give of his divine miſſion."

DOGMATIST.

"How! can Philoſophers be thus abuſive?"

RATIONALIST.

"Sometimes, when Saints ſet them the ex-"ample."

DOGMATIST.

"Oh! but I am authoriſed to abuſe you. "I ſpeak on the part of God Almighty."

RATIONALIST.

"It would not be improper, however, to "produce your credentials before you aſſume "your privileges."

DOGMATIST.

"My credentials are ſufficiently authenti-"cated. Both heaven and earth are witneſ-"ſes in my favour. Attend, I pray you to "my arguments."

RATIONALIST.

"Arguments! why you do not ſure pre-"tend to any! To tell me that my reaſon is "fallacious, is to refute whatever it may ſay "in your favour. Whoever refuſes to abide "by the dictates of reaſon, ought to be able to "convince, without making uſe of it. For, "ſuppoſing that in the courſe of your argu-

" ments you convince me, how ſhall I know
" whether it be not through the fallacy of rea-
" ſon depraved by ſin, that I acquieſce in what
" you affirm? Beſides, what proof, what de-
" monſtration can you ever employ more evi-
" dent than the axiom which deſtroys it? It is
" full as credible that a juſt ſyllogiſm ſhould be
" falſe, as that a part is greater than the whole."

DOGMATIST.

" What a difference! my proofs admit of
" no reply; they are of a ſupernatural kind."

RATIONALIST.

" Supernatural! What is the meaning of that
" term? I do not underſtand it."

DOGMATIST.

" Contraventions of the order of nature;
" prophecies, miracles and prodigies of every
" kind."

RATIONALIST.

" Prodigies and miracles! I have never ſeen
" any of theſe things."

DOGMATIST.

" No matter; others have ſeen them for
" you: We can bring clouds of witneſſes.—
" the teſtimony of whole nations."—

RATIONALIST.

" The teſtimony of whole nations! Is that a
" proof of the ſupernatural kind?"

DOGMATIST.

DOGMATIST.

"No. But when it is unanimous, it is in-
"conteſtible."

RATIONALIST.

"There is nothing more inconteſtible than
"the dictates of reaſon, nor can the teſtimony
"of all mankind prove the truth of an abſur-
"dity. Let us ſee ſome of your ſupernatural
"proofs then, as the atteſtation of men is not
"ſo."

DOGMATIST.

"Infidel wretch! It is plain the grace of
"God doth not ſpeak to thy underſtand-
"ing."

RATIONALIST.

"Whoſe fault is that? Not mine; for ac-
"cording to you, it is neceſſary to be enlight-
"ened by grace to know how to aſk for it.
"Begin then, and ſpeak to me in its ſtead."

DOGMATIST.

"Is not this what I am doing? But you will
"not hear me: What do you ſay to prophe-
"cies?"

RATIONALIST.

"As to prophecies; I ſay, in the firſt
"place, I have heard as few of them as I
"have ſeen miracles. And in the ſecond, I
"ſay that no prophecy bears any weight with
"me."

DOGMATIST.

DOGMATIST.

"Thou disciple of Satan! And why have "prophecies no weight with you?"

RATIONALIST.

"Because, to give them such weight, re- "quires three things; the concurrence of which "is impossible. These are, that I should in the "first place be a witness to the delivery of the "prophecy; next that I should be witness also "to the event; lastly that it should be clearly "demonstrated to me that such event could not "have followed by accident: For though a "prophecy were as precise, clear, and determi- "nate as an axiom of geometry; yet as the "perspicuity of a prediction, made at random, "does not render the accomplishment of it im- "possible, that accomplishment, when it hap- "pens, proves nothing in fact, concerning the "fore-knowlege of him who predicted it."

"You see, therefore, to what your pretend- "ed supernatural proofs, your miracles and "your prophecies reduce us: — to the folly of "believing them all on the credit of others, and "of submitting the authority of God, speaking "to our reason, to that of man. If those eter- "nal truths, of which my understanding forms "the strongest conceptions, can possibly be "false,

" falſe, I can have no hope of ever arriving at
" certitude, and ſo far from being capable of
" being aſſured that you ſpeak to me from God,
" I cannot even be aſſured of his exiſtence."

You ſee, my child, how many difficulties muſt be removed before our diſputants can agree; nor are theſe all. Among ſo many different religions, each of which proſcribes and excludes the other, one only muſt be true: if indeed there be ſuch a one among them all. Now to diſcover which this is, it is not enough to examine that one; it is neceſſary to examine them all, as we ſhould not on any occaſion whatever, condemn without a hearing. It is neceſſary to compare objections with proofs, and to know what each objects to in the reſt, as well as what the others have to offer in their defence. The more clearly any ſentiment or opinion appears demonſtrated, the more narrowly it behoves us to enquire, what are the reaſons which prevent its opponents from ſubſcribing to it. We muſt be very ſimple indeed, to think an attention to the theologiſts of our own party, ſufficient to inſtruct us in what our adverſaries have to offer. Where ſhall we find divines, of any perſuaſion, perfectly candid and honeſt? Do they not all begin to weaken the arguments of their opponents, before they proceed to refute them? Each is the ora-

cle of his party, and makes a great figure among his own partiſans, with ſuch proofs as would expoſe him to ridicule among thoſe of a different perſuaſion. Are you deſirous of gaining information from books? What a fund of erudition will not this require! How many languages muſt you learn! How many libraries muſt you turn over! And who is to direct you in the choice of the books? There are hardly to be found in any one country the beſt books on the contrary ſide of the queſtion, and ſtill leſs is it to be expected we ſhould find books on all ſides. The writings of the adverſe and abſent party, were they found alſo, would be very eaſily refuted. The abſent are always in the wrong, and the moſt weak and inſufficient arguments laid down with a confident aſſurance, eaſily efface the moſt ſenſible and valid, when expoſed with contempt. Add to all this, that nothing is more fallacious than books, nor exhibit leſs faithfully the ſentiments of their writers. The judgment which you formed, for inſtance, of the Roman Catholic religion, from the treatiſe of Boſſuet, was very different from that which you acquired by reſiding among us. You have ſeen that the doctrines we maintain in our controverſies with the proteſtants, are not thoſe which are taught the common people, and that Boſſuet's book by no means reſembles

the inſtructions delivered from the pulpit. To form a proper judgment of any religion, we are not to deduce its tenets from the books of its profeſſors; we muſt go and learn it among the people. Each ſect have their peculiar traditions, their cuſtoms, prejudices, and modes of acceptation, which conſtitute the peculiar mode of their faith; all which ſhould be taken into conſideration when we form a judgment of their religion.

How many conſiderable nations are there, who print no books of their own, and read none of ours! How are they to judge of our opinions, or we of theirs? We laugh at them, they deſpiſe us; and though our travellers have turned them into ridicule, they need only to travel among us, to ridicule us in their turn. In what country are there not to be found men of ſenſe and ſincerity, friends of truth, who require only to know, in order to embrace it? And yet every one imagines truth confined to his own particular ſyſtem, and thinks the religion of all other nations in the world abſurd; theſe foreign modes, therefore, cannot be in reality ſo very abſurd as they appear, or the apparent reaſonableneſs of ours is leſs real.

We have three principal religions in Europe. One admits only of one revelation, another of two, and the third of three. Each holds the

other in deteſtation, anathematizes its profeſſors, accuſes them of ignorance, obſtinacy and falſehood. What impartial perſon will preſume to decide between them, without having firſt examined their proofs, and heard their reaſons? That which admits only of one revelation is the moſt ancient, and ſeems the leaſt diſputable; that which admits of three is the moſt modern, and ſeems to be the moſt conſiſtent; that which admits of two, and rejects the third, may poſſibly be the beſt, but it hath certainly every prepoſſeſſion againſt it, its inconſiſtency ſtares one full in the face.

In all theſe three revelations, the ſacred books are written in languages unknown to the people who believe in them. The Jews no longer underſtand Hebrew; the Chriſtians neither Greek nor Hebrew; the Turks and Perſians underſtand no Arabick, and even the modern Arabs themſelves ſpeak not the language of Mahomet. Is not this a very ſimple manner of inſtructing mankind, by talking to them always in a language which they do not comprehend? But theſe books, it will be ſaid, are tranſlated; a mighty pretty anſwer! Who can aſſure me they are tranſlated faithfully, or that it is even poſſible they ſhould be ſo? Who can give me a ſufficient reaſon why God, when he hath a mind to

ſpeak

ſpeak to mankind, ſhould ſtand in need of an interpreter?

I can never conceive that, what every man is indiſpenſably obliged to know, can be ſhut up in theſe books; or that he who is incapcitated to underſtand them, or the perſons who explain them, will be puniſhed for involuntary ignorance. But we are always plaguing ourſelves with books. What a frenzy! Becauſe Europe is full of books, the Europeans conceive them to be indiſpenſible, without reflecting that three fourths of the world know nothing at all about them. Are not all books written by men? How greatly, therefore, muſt man have ſtood in need of them, to inſtruct him in his duty, and by what means did he come to the knowlege of ſuch duties, before books were written? Either he muſt have acquired ſuch knowledge of himſelf, or it muſt have been totally diſpenſed with.

We, Roman Catholicks, make a great noiſe about the authority of the church: but what do we gain by it, if it requires as many proofs to eſtabliſh this authority as other ſects require immediately to eſtabliſh their doctrines? The church determines that the church have a right to determine. Is not this a ſpecial proof of its

authority? And yet depart from this, and we enter into endleſs diſcuſſions.

Do you know many Chriſtians, who have taken the pains to examine carefully into what the Jews have alledged againſt us? If there are a few who know ſomething of them, it is from what they have met with in the writings of Chriſtians: a very pretty manner truly of inſtructing themſelves in the argugments of their opponents! But, what can be done? If any one ſhould dare to publiſh among us ſuch books as openly eſpouſe the cauſe of judaiſm, we ſhould puniſh the author, the editor and the bookſeller.* This policy is very convenient, and very ſure to make us always in the right. We can refute at pleaſure thoſe who are afraid to ſpeak.

Thoſe among us, alſo, who have an opportunity to converſe with the Jews, have but little advantage. Theſe unhappy people know they lie

* Among a thouſand known inſtances, the following ſtands in no need of a comment. The Catholic divines of the ſixteenth century having condemned all the Jewiſh books without exception, to be burnt, a learned and illuſtrious theologue, who was conſulted on that occaſion, had very nigh involved himſelf in ruin, by being ſimply of opinion that ſuch of them might be preſerved as did not relate to Chriſtianity, or treated of matters foreign to religion.

lie at our mercy; the tyranny we exerciſe over them, renders them juſtly timid and reſerved; they know how far cruelty and injuſtice are compatible with Chriſtian charity: What, therefore, can they venture to ſay to us, without running the riſk of incurring the charge of blaſphemy? Avarice inſpires us with zeal, and they are too rich not to be ever in the wrong. The moſt ſenſible and learned among them are the moſt circumſpect and reſerved. We make a convert, perhaps of ſome wretched hireling, to calumniate his ſect; ſet a parcel of pitiful brokers diſputing, who give up the point merely to gratify us; but while we triumph over the ignorance or meanneſs of ſuch wretched opponents, the learned among them ſmile in contemptuous ſilence at our folly. But do you think that in places where they might write and ſpeak ſecurely, we ſhould have ſo much the advantage of them? Among the doctors of the Sorbonne, it is as clear as day-light, that the predictions concerning the Meſſiah relate to Jeſus Chriſt. Among the Rabbins at Amſterdam, it is juſt as evident they have no relation at all to him. I ſhall never believe that I have acquired a ſufficient acquaintance with the arguments of the Jews, till they compoſe a free and independent ſtate, and have their ſchools and univerſities, where they may talk and diſ-

pute with freedom and impunity. Till then, we can never truly know what they have to ſay.

At Conſtantinople, the Turks make known their reaſons, and we durſt not publiſh ours: there it is our turn to ſubmit. If the Turks require us to pay to Mahomet, in whom we do not believe, the ſame reſpect which we require the Jews to pay to Jeſus Chriſt, in whom they believe as little; can the Turks be in the wrong, and we in the right? On what principle of equity can we reſolve that queſtion, in our own favour?

Two thirds of mankind are neither Jews, Mahometans nor Chriſtians, how many millions of men, therefore, muſt there be who never heard of Moſes, of Jeſus Chriſt, or of Mahomet! Will this be denied? Will it be ſaid that our Miſſionaries are diſperſed over the face of the whole earth? This indeed is eaſily affirmed; but are there are any of them in the interior parts of Africa, where no European hath ever yet penetrated? Do they travel through the inland parts of Tartary, or follow on horſeback the wandering Hords, whom no ſtranger ever approaches, and who ſo far from having heard of the pope, hardly know any thing of

their

their own Grand Lama? Do our miſſionaries traverſe the immenſe continent of America, where there are whole nations ſtill ignorant that the people of another world have ſet foot on theirs? Are there any of them in Japan, from whence their ill behaviour hath baniſhed them for ever, and where the fame of their predeceſſors is tranſmitted to ſucceeding generations, as that of artful knaves, who under cover of a religious zeal, wanted to make themſelves imperceptibly maſters of the empire? Do they penetrate into the harams of the Aſiatic princes, to preach the goſpel to millions of wretched ſlaves? What will become of the women, in that part of the world, for want of a miſſionary to preach the goſpel to them? Muſt every one of them go to hell for being a recluſe?

But were it true that the goſpel is preached in every part of the earth, the difficulty is not removed. On the eve preceding the arrival of the firſt miſſionary in any country, ſome one perſon of that country expired without hearing the glad tidings. Now what muſt we do with this one perſon? Is there but a ſingle individual in the whole univerſe, to whom the goſpel of Chriſt is not made known, the objection which preſents itſelf, on account of this one perſon, is

as cogent as if it included a fourth part of the human race.

Again, ſuppoſing the miniſters of the goſpel actually preſent and preaching in thoſe diſtant nations, how can they reaſonably expect to be believed on their own word, and that their hearers will not ſcrupulouſly require a confirmation of what they teach? Might not any one of the latter very reaſonably ſay to them, "You tell me of a God who was born and put to death near two thouſand years ago, at the other end of the world, and in I know not what obſcure town; aſſuring me that all thoſe who do not believe in this myſterious tale are damned. Theſe are things too ſtrange to be readily credited on the ſole authority of a man, who, is himſelf a perfect ſtranger. Why hath your God brought thoſe events to paſs, of which he requires me to be inſtructed, at ſo great a diſtance? Is it a crime to be ignorant of what paſſes at the Antipodes? Is it poſſible for me to divine that there exiſted in the other hemiſphere, the people of the Jews, and the city of Jeruſalem? I might as well be required to know what happens in the moon. You are come, you ſay, to inform me; but why did you not come time enough to inform my father, or why do you damn that good old man becauſe he knew nothing

thing of the matter? Muſt he be eternally puniſhed for your delay; he who was ſo juſt, ſo benevolent, and ſo deſirous of knowing the truth? Be honeſt, and ſuppoſe yourſelf in my place. Do you think, upon your teſtimony alone, that I can believe all theſe incredible things you tell me, or reconcile ſo much injuſtice with the character of that juſt God, whom you pretend to make known? Let me firſt, I pray you, go and ſee this diſtant country, where ſo many miracles have happened totally unknown here; let me go and be well informed why the inhabitants of that Jeruſalem preſumed to treat God like a thief or a murderer? They did not you will ſay, acknowlege his divinity. How then can I, who never have heard of him but from you? You add that they were puniſhed, diſperſed, and led into captivity; not one of them ever approaching their former city. Aſſuredly they deſerved all this: but its preſent inhabitants, what ſay they of the unbelief and *Deicide* of their predeceſſors? They deny it, and acknowlege the divinity of the ſacred perſonage juſt as little as did its ancient inhabitants.

"What! in the ſame city in which your God was put to death, neither the ancient nor preſent inhabitants acknowlege his divinity! And yet you would have me believe it, who was born near

near two thouſand years after the fact, and two thouſand leagues diſtant from the place! Don't you ſee that, before I can give credit to this book, which you call ſacred, and of which I comprehend nothing, I ought to be informed from others, when and by whom it was written, how it hath been perſerved and tranſmitted to you, what is ſaid of it in the country, what are the reaſons of thoſe who reject it, though they know as well as you every thing of which you have informed me? You muſt perceive the neceſſity I am under, of going firſt to Europe, to Aſia and into Paleſtine, to examine into things myſelf: and that I muſt be an idiot to liſten to you before I have done this".

Such a diſcourſe as this, appears to me not only very reaſonable; but I affirm that every ſenſible man ought, in ſuch circumſtances, to ſpeak in the ſame manner, and to ſend a miſſionary about his buſineſs, who ſhould be in haſte to inſtruct and baptize him, before he had ſufficiently verified the proofs of his miſſion. Now, I maintain that there is no revelation againſt which the ſame objections might not be made, and that with greater force than againſt Chriſtianity. Hence it follows that, if there be in the world but one true religion, and every man be obliged to adopt it under pain of damnation,

nation, it is neceſſary to ſpend our lives in the ſtudy of all religions, to viſit the countries where they have been eſtabliſhed, and examine and compare them with each other. No man is exempted from the principal duty of his ſpecies, and no one hath a right to confide in the judgment of another. The artiſan, who lives only by his induſtry, the huſbandman who cannot read, the timid and delicate virgin, the feeble valetudinarian, all without exception, muſt ſtudy, meditate, diſpute, and travel the world over in ſearch of truth: there would be no longer any ſettled inhabitants in a country; the face of the earth being covered with pilgrims, going from place to place, at great trouble and expence, to verify, examine and compare the ſeveral different ſyſtems and modes of worſhip to be met with in various countries. We muſt in ſuch a caſe bid adieu to arts and ſciences, to trade and all the civil occupations of life. Every other ſtudy muſt give give place to that of religion; while, the man who ſhould enjoy the greateſt ſhare of health and ſtrength, and make the beſt uſe of his time and his reaſon, for the greateſt term of years allotted to human life, would, in the extreme of old age, be ſtill perplexed where to fix; and it would be a great thing after all, if he ſhould learn before

his death what religion he ought to have believed and practiſed during life.

Do you endeavour to mitigate the ſeverity of this method, and place as little confidence as poſſible in the authority of men? In ſo doing you place the greateſt confidence; for if the ſon of a Chriſtian does right, in adopting, without a ſcrupulous and impartial examination, the religion of his father, how can the ſon of a Turk do wrong, in adopting in the ſame manner the religion of Mahomet? I defy all the perſecutors in the world to anſwer this queſtion in a manner ſatisfactory to any perſon of common-ſenſe. Nay ſome of them, when hard preſſed by ſuch arguments, will ſooner admit that God is unjuſt, and viſits the ſins of the fathers on the children, than give up their cruel and perſecuting principles. Others, indeed, elude the force of theſe reaſons by civilly ſending an angel to inſtruct thoſe, who, under invincible ignorance, lived nevertheleſs, good moral lives. A very pretty device, truly, that of the angel! Not contented with ſubjecting us to their machinery, they would reduce the Deity himſelf to the neceſſity of employing it.

See, my ſon, to what abſurdities we are led by pride, and the ſpirit of perſecution, by being puffed

puffed up with our own capacity, and conceiving that we poſſeſs a greater ſhare of reaſon than the reſt of mankind. I call to witneſs that God of peace whom I adore and whom I would make known to you, that my reſearches have been always ſincere; but ſeeing, that they were, and always muſt be, unſucceſsful, and that I was launched out into a boundleſs ocean of perplexity, I returned the way I came, and confined my creed within the limits of my firſt notions. I could never believe that God required me, under pain of damnation to be ſo very learned. I therefore ſhut up all my books. That of nature, lies open to every eye: It is from this ſublime and wonderful volume that I learn to ſerve and adore its Divine Author. No perſon is excuſeable for neglecting to read in this book, as it is written in an univerſal language, intelligible to all mankind. Had I been born in a deſert iſland, or never ſeen a human creature beſide myſelf; had I never been informed of what had formerly happened in a certain corner of the world; I might yet have learned, by the exerciſe and cultivation of my reaſon, and by the proper uſe of thoſe faculties God hath given me, to know and to love him; I might hence have learned to love and admire his power, and goodneſs and to have diſcharged my duty here on earth. What can the knowledge of the learned teach me more?

With regard to revelation, could I reaſon better or were I better informed, I might be made ſenſible perhaps of its truth and of its utility to thoſe who are ſo happy as to believe it: but if there are ſome proofs in its favour which I cannot invalidate, there appear alſo to me many objections againſt it, which I cannot reſolve. There are ſo many ſolid reaſons both for and againſt its authority, that, not knowing what to conclude, I neither admit nor reject it. I reject only the obligation of ſubmitting to it, becauſe this pretended obligation is incompatible with the juſtice of God, and that, ſo far from its removing the obſtacles to ſalvation, it raiſes thoſe which are inſurmountable by the greateſt part of mankind. Except in this article, therefore, I remain reſpectfully in doubt concerning the ſcriptures. I have not the preſumption to think myſelf infallible: more able perſons may poſſibly determine in caſes that to me appear undeterminable: I reaſon for myſelf, not for them; I neither cenſure nor imitate them: their judgment may probably be better than mine; but am I to blame that it is not mine?

I will confeſs to you farther, that the majeſty of the ſcriptures ſtrikes me with admiration, as the purity of the goſpel hath its influence on my heart. Peruſe the works of our philoſophers with

with all their pomp of diction; how mean, how contemptible are they, compared with the ſcripture! Is it poſſible that a book at once ſo ſimple and ſublime ſhould be merely the work of man? Is it poſſible that the ſacred perſonage, whoſe hiſtory it contains, ſhould be himſelf a mere man? Do we find that he aſſumed the tone of an enthuſiaſt or ambitious ſectary? What ſweetneſs, what purity in his manners! What an affecting gracefulneſs in his delivery! What ſublimity in his maxims! What profound wiſdom in his diſcourſes! What preſence of mind, what ſubtilty, what truth in his replies! How great the command over his paſſions! Where is the man, where the philoſopher, who could ſo live and ſo die, without weakneſs and without oſtentation? When Plato deſcribed his imaginary good man * loaded with all the ſhame of guilt, yet meriting the higheſt rewards of virtue, he deſcribes exactly the character of JESUS CHRIST: the reſemblance was ſo ſtriking that all the fathers perceived it.

What prepoſſeſſion, what blindneſs muſt it be to compare the ſon of Sophroniſcus to the ſon of Mary? What an infinite diſproportion there is between them! Socrates, dying without pain or ignominy, eaſily ſupported his character to the laſt,

* De Rep. dial. 1.

laſt, and if his death, however eaſy, had not crowned his life, it might have been doubted whether Socrates, with all his wiſdom, was any thing more than a vain ſophiſt. He invented, it is ſaid, the theory of morals. Others, however, had before put them in practice; he had only to ſay what they had done, and reduce their examples to precepts. Ariſtides had been *juſt*, before Socrates defined juſtice; Leonidas gave up his life for his country before Socrates declared patriotiſm to be a duty; the Spartans were a ſober people, before Socrates recommended ſobriety: before he had even defined virtue, Greece abounded in virtuous men. But where could JESUS learn, among his compatriots, that pure and ſublime morality of which he only hath given us both precept and example*. The greateſt wiſdom was made known amidſt the moſt bigotted fanaticiſm, and the ſimplicity of the moſt heroic virtues did honour to the vileſt people on the earth. The death of Socrates, peaceably philoſophiſing with his friends, appears the moſt agreeable that could be wiſhed for; that of JESUS, expiring in the midſt of agonizing pains, abuſed, inſulted, curſed by a whole

* See, in his diſcourſe on the mount, the parallel he makes between the morality of Moſes and his own. Matt. v. 21. &c.

whole nation, is the moſt horrible that could be feared. Socrates, in receiving the cup of poiſon, bleſſed indeed the weeping executioner who adminiſtered it; but JESUS, in the midſt of excruciating tortures prayed for his mercileſs tormentors. Yes, if the life and death of Socrates are thoſe of a ſage, the life and death of JESUS are thoſe of a God. Shall we ſuppoſe the evangelic hiſtory a mere fiction? indeed, my friend, it bears not the marks of fiction; on the contrary, the hiſtory of Socrates, which nobody preſumes to doubt, is not ſo well atteſted as that of JESUS CHRIST. Such a ſuppoſition in fact only ſhifts the difficulty without removing it: it is more inconceivable that a number of perſons ſhould agree to write ſuch a hiſtory, than that one only ſhould furniſh the ſubject of it. The Jewiſh authors were incapable of the diction, and ſtrangers to the morality contained in the goſpel; the marks of whoſe truth are ſo ſtriking and inimitable, that the inventor would be a more aſtoniſhing character than the hero. And yet, with all this, the ſame goſpel abounds with incredible relations, with circumſtances repugnant to reaſon, and which it is impoſſible for a man of ſenſe either to conceive or admit. What is to be done amidſt all theſe contradictions? Be modeſt and circumſpect: regard in ſilence what cannot be either diſproved or comprehended,

prehended, and humble thyſelf before the ſupreme Being, who only knows the truth.

Such is the involuntary ſcepticiſm in which I remain: this ſcepticiſm, however, is not painful to me, becauſe it extends not to any eſſential point of practice; and as my mind is firmly ſettled regarding the principles of my duty, I ſerve God in the ſincerity of my heart: in the mean time I ſeek not to know any thing more than what relates to my moral conduct; and as to thoſe dogmas, which have no influence over the behaviour, and which many perſons give themſelves ſo much trouble about, I am not at all ſolicitous concerning them. I look upon the various particular religions as ſo many ſalutary inſtitutions, preſcribing, in different countries, an uniform manner of public worſhip; and which may all have their reſpective reaſons, peculiar to the climate, government, genius of the people adopting them, or ſome other motive which renders the one preferable to the other according to the circumſtance of time and place. I believe all that are convenient, to be good, when God is ſerved in ſincerity of heart. This ſervice is all that is eſſential. He rejects not the homage of the ſincere, under whatſoever form they preſent it. Being called to the ſervice of the church, I comply therefore,

therefore, with a ſcrupulous exactneſs, to all the forms it preſcribes in my duty, and ſhould reproach myſelf for the leaſt wilful neglect of them. After having lain under a long prohibition, I obtained, through the intereſt of M. de Mellerade a permiſſion to reaſſume the functions of the prieſthood, to procure me a livelihood. I had been accuſtomed formerly to ſay maſs with all that levity and careleſneſs with which we perform the moſt ſerious and important offices after having very often repeated them. Since I entertained my new principles, however, I celebrate it with greater veneration; penetrated by reflecting on the majeſty of the ſupreme Being, and the inſufficiency of the human mind that is ſo little able to form conceptions relative to its author. I conſider that I offer up the prayers of a people under a preſcribed form of worſhip, and therefore carefully obſerve all its rites. I recite carefully; and ſtrive not to omit the leaſt word or ceremony; when I am juſt going to communicate, I recollect myſelf, in order to do it with all thoſe diſpoſitions that the church and the importance of the ſacrament require: I endeavour on this occaſion to ſilence the voice of reaſon before the ſupreme intelligence: I ſay to myſelf, who art thou, to preſume to ſet bounds to omnipotence? I reverently pronounce the ſacramental

mental words, and annex to them all the faith that depends on me. Whatever be the truth with regard to that inconceivable myſtery, I am not fearful, therefore, of being charged at the day of judgment with profaning it in my heart.

Honoured with the miniſterial office, though of the loweſt rank, I will never do, or ſay, any thing that may make me unworthy to fulfil its ſacred functions. I will always inculcate virtue, exhort my auditors to purſue it, and, as far as it is in my power, ſet them an example. It does not depend on me to make their religion amiable, nor to confine the articles of their faith to what is uſeful, and neceſſary for all to believe: but God forbid that I ſhould ever preach up the cruel tenets of perſecution, that I ſhould ever induce them to hate their neighbours, or to conſign over others to damnation*. Were I, indeed,

* The duty of adopting and reſpecting the religion of one's country does not extend to ſuch tenets as are contrary to moral virtue; ſuch as that of perſecution. It is this horrible dogma which arms mankind inhumanly againſt each other, and renders them deſtructive to the human race. The diſtinction between political and theological toleration is puerile and ridiculous, as they are inſeparable, ſo that one cannot be admitted without the other. Angels themſelves could not live in peace with men, whom they regarded as enemies to God.

indeed, in a ſuperior ſtation, this reſerve might incur cenſure; but I am too inſignificant to have much to fear, and I can never fall lower than I am. But whatever may happen, I will never blaſpheme divine juſtice, nor lie againſt the Holy-Ghoſt.

I have long been ambitious of the honour of being a paſtor; I am indeed ſtill ambitious, tho' I have no longer any hopes of it. There is no character in the world, my good friend, which appears to me ſo deſireable as that of a paſtor. A good paſtor is a miniſter of goodneſs, as a good magiſtrate is a miniſter of juſtice. A paſtor can have no temptation to evil; and tho' he may not always have it in his power to do good himſelf, he is always in his duty when ſoliciting it of others, and very often obtains it when he knows how to make himſelf truly reſpectable. O, that I enjoyed but ſome little benefice among the poor people in our mountains! how happy ſhould I then be! for I cannot but think that I ſhould make my pariſhioners happy! I ſhould never, indeed, make them rich, but I ſhould partake their poverty; I would raiſe them above meanneſs and contempt, more inſupportable than indigence itſelf. I would induce them to love concord, and to cheriſh that equality which often baniſhes poverty, and always ren-

ders

ders it more ſupportable. When they ſhould ſee that I was no richer than themſelves and yet lived content, they would learn to conſole themſelves under their lot and to live contented too. In the inſtructions I ſhould give them, I ſhould be leſs directed by the ſenſe of the church than that of the goſpel; whoſe tenets are more ſimple and whoſe morals more ſublime; that teaches few religious forms and many deeds of charity. Before I ſhould teach them their duty, I ſhould always endeavour to practiſe it myſelf, in order to let them ſee that I really thought as I ſpoke. Had I any proteſtants in my neighbourhood or in my pariſh, I would make no diſtinction between them and my own flock, in every thing that regarded acts of chriſtian charity; I would endeavour to make them all equally love each other, regard each other as brothers; reſpecting all religions, and at peace enjoying their own. I conceive that, to ſolicit any one to quit the religion he is brought up in, is to ſolicit him to do wrong, and is of conſequence to do wrong one's ſelf. Let us, therefore, preſerve the public peace, and wait the progreſs of further information: the laws in every country ſhould be reſpected, we ſhould never diſturb the eſtabliſhed worſhip, nor excite the people to diſobedience: for we know not abſolutely whether it be better for them to change their preſent opinions for

others, and we know of a certainty that it is an evil to trangreſs the laws.

Thus, my young friend, have I given you with my own lips, a recital of my creed, ſuch as the ſupreme Being reads it in my heart. You are the firſt perſon to whom I have made this profeſſion; you are alſo the only one perhaps, to whom I ſhall ever make it. So long as men cheriſh any ſalutary belief at all, we ought not to diſturb the weak, nor excite the doubts of the ſimple, by difficulties which they cannot reſolve, and which diſquiet their minds, without informing their underſtandings. But when once ſcepticiſm hath taken entire poſſeſſion of the mind, we ought to ſave the trunk at the expence of the branches; in ſuch a ſtate the agitated and dubious conſciences of men, are juſt as I have ſeen yours, almoſt extinct, and require to be awakened and confirmed: to eſtabliſh them on the baſis of eternal truths, it is neceſſary therefore, entirely to looſen the hold they may ſtill retain of the floating ſeeds of uncertainty.

You are now arrived at that critical term of life, in which the mind opens itſelf to conviction, in which the heart receives the form and character, which it bears during life, whether good or ill. Its ſubſtance grows afterwards

hard, and receives no new impreſſions. Now is the time, therefore, to impreſs on your mind the ſeal of truth. If I were more poſitive in myſelf, I ſhould have aſſumed a more deciſive and dogmatical air; but I am a man ignorant and ſubject to error. What can I do more? I have opened to you my heart, without reſerve: what I have thought certain, I have given you as ſuch; my doubts I have declared as doubts, my opinions as opinions; and have given you my reaſons for both. It remains, now, for you to judge; you have taken time; this precaution is wiſe and makes me think well of you. Begin by bringing your conſcience to a ſtate deſirous of being enlightened. Be ſincere with yourſelf. Adopt thoſe of my ſentiments which you are perſuaded are true, and reject the reſt. You are not yet ſo much depraved by vice to run the riſk of making a bad choice. I ſhould propoſe to confer together ſometimes on theſe ſubjects; but as ſoon as ever we enter into diſputes we grow warm; obſtinacy and vanity interfere and ſincerity is baniſhed. Never diſpute, therefore, with any one, for in ſo doing we neither inform ourſelves nor others. For my own part, it was not till after ſeveral years of meditation that my ſentiments became fixed; theſe, however, I ſtill retain, my conſcience is eaſy and I am content. Were I deſirous to begin a new examination

nation into the truth of theſe ſentiments, I could not do it with a more ſincere love to truth; and my mind, at preſent leſs active, would be leſs in a ſtate to diſcover it. I purpoſe therefore, to remain as I am, leſt my taſte for contemplation ſhould become inſenſibly an idle paſſion; leſt it ſhould make me indifferent to the diſcharge of my practical duties, and reduce me into my former ſtate of ſcepticiſm, without leaving me force enough to extricate myſelf. Above half my life is already ſpent, the remainder will not afford me time more than ſufficient to repair my errors by my virtues. If I am miſtaken, it is not wilfully. That Being, who ſearches the hearts of men, knows that I am not fond of ignorance. But under my preſent incapacity to inſtruct myſelf better, the only method that remains for me to extricate myſelf, is a good life; and if out of ſtones God can raiſe up children to Abraham, every man may juſtly hope to be enlightened when he becomes worthy to be ſo.

If my reflections ſhould lead you to think as I do, if my ſentiments ſhould be the ſame as yours, and we ſhould both be of the ſame belief, I would give you the following advice: Expoſe yourſelf no more to the temptations of poverty and deſpair; lead no longer a life of ignominy,

ſubſiſting at the mercy of ſtrangers, on the bread of charity. Return to your own country, embrace again the religion of your fathers, adopt it in ſincerity of heart, and give it up no more; it is very ſimple and very pure: of all the religions in the world, I believe it is that which may boaſt the moſt refined and rational ſyſtem of morality. With regard to the expences of the journey, give yourſelf no trouble about that; you ſhall be amply provided. Be not abaſhed, alſo, by the falſe ſhame of a mortifying return; We may bluſh at the commitment of a fault, but ought not to bluſh at repairing it. You are as yet at an age, wherein every thing is forgiven, but beyond which you cannot proceed to err with impunity. If you attend to the voice of conſcience, a thouſand vain obſtacles will be diſſipated. You will perceive that, in our preſent ſtate of uncertainty, it is an inexcuſeable preſumption to profeſs any other religion than that in which we were educated; and a great error not to practice ſincerely that which we profeſs. By a different conduct, if we err, we deprive ourſelves of a powerful excuſe at the tribunal of our ſovereign judge; for will not he rather pardon us the errors in which we were born, than thoſe of which we have ourſelves made choice?

Preſerve your mind, my ſon, always in a ſtate to wiſh there ſhould be a God, and you will never doubt of his exiſtence. As for the reſt, whatever religion you may embrace, remember that its real duties are independent of human inſtitutions: that an upright heart is the temple of the Divinity; and that in every country and in every ſect, to love God above all things and thy neighbour as thyſelf, is the ſummary of the law; remember that no religion upon earth can diſpenſe with the obligations of morality, that nothing is truly eſſential but theſe, that the heart-felt adoration of the Deity is the firſt of theſe obligations, and that without faith there can be no true virtue.

Avoid all thoſe who, under pretence of explaining natural cauſes, plant the moſt deſtructive doctrines in the hearts of men; and whoſe apparent ſcepticiſm is an hundred times more dogmatical and affirmative than the deciſive tone of their adverſaries. Under the haughty pretext of being the only perſons who are truly enlightened, honeſt and ſincere, they ſubject us imperiouſly to their magiſterial deciſions, and give us, for the true principles of things, only unintelligible ſyſtems, which they have raiſed in their own imaginations. Add to this, that while they overturn, deſtroy and trample under

ſeet every thing that is reſpectable among mankind, they deprive the afflicted of the laſt conſolation in their miſery; take from the rich and powerful the only check to the indulgence of their paſſions; they eradicate from our hearts the remorſe of guilt and the hopes of virtue; abſurdly boaſting themſelves at the ſame time the friends and benefactors of mankind. The truth, ſay they, can never be hurtful: ſo far I am of their opinion, and this is to me a great proof that what they teach, cannot be true*. Young man, be ſincere without vanity;

* The contending parties reciprocally attack each other with ſo many ſophiſms, that it would be a raſh enterprize to undertake to expoſe them all. One of the moſt common on the philoſophical ſide of the queſtion is, to contraſt an imaginary people, ſuppoſed to be all good philoſophers, with another people all bad chriſtians; as if it were more eaſy to make a people true philoſophers than good chriſtians. I know not whether among individuals, one be more eaſily met with than the other; but this I know, that when we ſpeak of a whole people, we muſt ſuppoſe that they would as much abuſe a philoſophy without religion as they do a religion without philoſophy; and this conſideration ſeems to me to make a great difference in the queſtion. Bayle has proved very acutely, that fanaticiſm is more pernicious than Atheiſm; and this is not to be diſputed; but he neglected to obſerve what is nevertheleſs true, that fanaticiſm, the ſanguinary and cruel, is a great and animating paſſion, that it elevates the heart of man, and makes him look down with contempt on death; that it is a prodigious ſpring of action, and requires only to be

vanity; while you acquieſce in your ignorance you neither deceive yourſelf nor others. If ever

be duly regulated in order to produce the moſt ſublime virtues; whereas, on the contrary, irreligion and a philoſophical ſpirit in general, attaches us to life, enervates and debaſes the ſoul, concentrating all our paſſions in ſelf-intereſt, and thus ſapping by degrees the foundations of ſociety. If atheiſm be leſs ſanguinary, it is leſs out of a love to peace than from an indifference to virtue: let the world go how it will it little concerns theſe pretended ſages, provided they can loll at eaſe in their cloſets. Their principles do not excite them to ſlaughter mankind, but they prevent them from adding to their number, by corrupting the manners which tend to their increaſe; by detaching themſelves from their ſpecies, and reducing all their affections to a ſelfiſh egotiſm, as fatal to population as to virtue. The indifference of the philoſopher reſembles the tranquility of a ſtate under a deſpotic government: it is the tranquility of death, and more deſtructive than war itſelf. Thus fanaticiſm, though more fatal in its immediate effects than what is called the philoſophic ſpirit of the age, is much leſs ſo in its remoter conſequences.

Philoſophy, on its own principles, cannot be productive of any virtue, which does not flow from religion, and religion is productive of many virtues to which philoſophy is a ſtranger. As to practice, it is another thing, and remains to be examined. There is no man who practices in every particular the duties of his religion, when he has one; that is true; the greater part of mankind have hardly any religion at all, and practice nothing of what little they have; this alſo is very true: but after all ſome people have religion, and practice it at leaſt in part; and it is inconteſtible, that motives of religion pre-

ever you cultivate your talents ſo far as to enable you to publiſh your ſentiments to the world, ſpeak

vent them often from falling into vice, and excite to virtuous and commendable actions, which they had not performed but for ſuch motives. Let a Prieſt be guilty of a breach of truſt; what does this prove but that a blockhead had confided in him? If Paſcal himſelf had done it, this would have proved Paſcal a hypocrite; nothing more.—But a Prieſt!—Well, and what then? Are thoſe who make a traffic of religion the truly religious? The crimes of the clergy by no means prove that religion is uſeleſs, but that few perſons are religious.

Modern governments are undoubtedly indebted to chriſtianity for their moſt ſolid authority, and the rarity of revolutions; it has even rendered them leſs ſanguinary: this is proved by comparing them with the ancient governments. Religion better underſtood hath, by baniſhing fanaticiſm given a greater mildneſs to chriſtian manners. This alteration is not the effect of letters, for we do not find that wherever literature hath flouriſhed, humanity hath been at all the more reſpected; the cruelty of the Athenians, of the Ægyptians, the Roman Emperors and the Chineſe are evidence of this. On the other hand, what deeds of charity and mercy have been effected by the goſpel! how many reſtitutions, and reparations hath not the practice of confeſſion brought about among the Catholics? Among us how many reconciliations are effected, how many alms are diſtributed before an approaching communion? Among the Jews, avarice let go its hold, and miſery was baniſhed from among them, on the approach of their Jubilee. Not a beggar was to be ſeen in their ſtreets, as there is not among the Turks, whoſe charitable foundations are innumerable. By the principles of their religion, they are taught to be hoſpitable even to the ene

mies

ſpeak from the dictates of your own conſcience, without troubling yourſelf about applauſe. The abuſe of knowledge produces incredulity. The man of ſcience diſdains the ſentiments of the vulgar, and would ever be ſingular in his own. The vanity of philoſophy leads to infidelity, as a blind devotion leads to fanaticiſm. Avoid both extremes, remain ever firm in the way of truth, or in that which appears ſo to you in the ſimplicity of your heart, without ever being drawn aſide by pride or weakneſs. Be not afraid to acknowledge God among philoſophers, nor to

mies of it. Chardin tells us that the Mahometans imagine there is a bridge, which they call *Poul-Serrho*, thrown over the flames of hell, which they are to paſs at the general reſurrection; and this they cannot do till they have repaired the injuries they have committed. Can I conceive that this bridge which is to repair ſo many iniquities does not actually prevent ſome? Suppoſe we were to deprive the Perſians of this idea, by perſuading them there is no ſuch thing as their *Poul-Serrho*, nor any thing like it, where the oppreſſed ſhall be revenged on their oppreſſors after death; is it not clear that the latter would be very much at their eaſe, and would be freed from the trouble of appeaſing the former? It is, therefore, falſe that this doctrine is not hurtful; and therefore it cannot be true.

Your moral precepts, my philoſopher, are very fine, but pray let me know what ſanction you have for them. Forbear a moment to wander from the point, and tell me plainly what you would ſubſtitute in the place of the *Poul-Serrho*.

to ſtand up an advocate for humanity among perſecutors. You may perhaps be thought ſingular, but you will carry about you the innate teſtimony of a good conſcience, which will enable you to diſpenſe with the approbation of men. Whether they love or hate you, whether they admire or deſpiſe your writings, it is no matter. Speak what is true, do what is right; for the object of greateſt importance is to diſcharge our duty. Our private intereſt, my child, deceives us; but the hopes of the juſt cannot be deceived.

I HAVE TRANSCRIBED the foregoing tract, not as a rule we ought to follow in matters of religion; but as an example of the manner in which we ought to reaſon with our pupil, in order to prevent his wandering from the method I have endeavoured to eſtabliſh. While we place no confidence in the authority of men, nor are influenced by national prejudices, the light of reaſon can carry us no farther than to the truths of natural religion: to which alſo I confine myſelf in the education of Emilius. If it be needful for him to adopt any other, I have no right to be his director there; he ſhould in this be left to make his own choice.

We

We labour in concert with nature, and while ſhe is forming the phyſical man, we endeavour to form the moral one; but the degrees of our progreſs are not the ſame. The body is become robuſt and ſtrong, while the ſoul is yet languiſhing and feeble; for, in ſpite of all the efforts of human art, the temperament will always go before the underſtanding. It is to reſtrain the one and incite the other, that our endeavours have been hitherto directed, in order that the man ſhould be as uniform and conſiſtent as poſſible. In the developement of his conſtitution, we have diverted his growing ſenſibility, and in cultivating his reaſon have endeavoured to regulate it. The intellectual objects preſented him, have moderated the impreſſions of thoſe which were ſenſible. In recurring to the firſt principle of things, we drew him off from the influence of ſenſe; nor could any method be more ſimple than to elevate him from the ſtudy of nature to the inveſtigation of its divine author.

When we arrived ſo far, we had got new hold of our pupil; we had ſecured new means of making way to his heart. He ſaw not till then his intereſt in being virtuous, in extending his views to the good of others, and, without being compelled to it by laws, in being juſt to God

God and himſelf; in doing his duty, even at the peril of his life, and in cheriſhing virtue, not only for the ſake of any moral order preferable to the love of himſelf, but for the ſake of the Author of his Being; a love conſiſtent with that he bears to his own perſon, and for the ſake of enjoying, at length, that laſting happineſs, which a good conſcience and the contemplation of a ſupreme Being promiſe him in another life, after having well employed the preſent. If we throw aſide theſe conſiderations, I ſee nothing but injuſtice, hypocriſy and falſhood among mankind; private intereſt, which in their mutual intercourſe is neceſſarily uppermoſt, teaching them to hide the deformity of vice by the maſk of virtue. Let all mankind contribute to my happineſs at the expence of their own; let every thing be made ſubſervient to my purpoſes, let all mankind periſh, in pain and miſery, to ſpare me for a moment the uneaſineſs of deſire or hunger. Such is the language of every reaſoning infidel. Yes, I will maintain it all my life, that whoever ſaith in his heart, there is no God, and ſpeaks otherwiſe, is either a liar or a fool.

I perceive, reader, let me do what I will, that you and I ſhall never behold Emilius in the

the ſame light: you will always imagine him to be like other young people, giddy, petulant, flighty, running from one entertainment or amuſement to another, without ſettling to any thing. You ſmile at my making a young man, in the moſt unruly ſtate of his paſſions, a contemplative philoſopher and a ſober theologiſt: You will be apt to ſay, this viſionary is conſtantly in purſuit of chimeras; in deſcribing a pupil educated in his manner, he does not model a real, but creates an imaginary Being. He deduces an example merely from his own brain, and while he conceives himſelf purſuing the track of nature, at every ſtep departs from it. On my part, again, in comparing my pupil with yours, I hardly ſee any thing in which they agree. Being educated ſo differently, it would be almoſt a miracle, if they reſembled each other in any circumſtance. As Emilius hath paſſed his infancy in the enjoyment of all that liberty which your pupils take in their youth; he begins in his youth to make uſe of that rule, to which they are made to ſubmit when children: this rule hence becoming their plague, they conceive a diſtaſte for it, and perceive in it only the laſting tyranny of their preceptors: they imagine themſelves ſtill in a ſtate of childhood, unleſs they are permitted to throw

throw off all kind of reſtraint;* and when permitted to do this indemnify themſelves for the long conſtraint they have lain under, as a priſoner, whoſe irons are juſt knocked off, joyfully ſtretches and exerciſes his limbs.

Emilius, on the contrary, is ambitious of becoming a man and ſubjecting himſelf to the yoke of his growing reaſon: his body, already formed, no longer ſtands in need of the ſame degree of action, but begins to affect reſt, while his mind, as yet but half diſplayed, makes its efforts to expand itſelf, in its turn. Thus in arriving at the age of reaſon, your pupils enter upon an age of licentiouſneſs, and mine on the age of diſcretion.

Would you know whether, in this reſpect, he or they purſue beſt the order of nature? Conſider the difference between thoſe who are more or leſs removed from it. Obſerve the young people among the peaſants, and ſee if they are as petulant as yours in town. "During the infancy "of ſavages, ſays M. Le Beau, they are ob-"ſerved

* No perſons regard a ſtate of infancy with ſo much contempt as thoſe who are juſt riſen out of it, as there is no country where rank is more ſcrupulouſly diſtinguiſhed than in thoſe where the inequality is not very great, and every one is conſtantly afraid of being confounded with his inferior.

"ſerved to be always active, and employed "in various kinds of bodily exerciſes; but "they no ſooner attain the age of youth, "than they become tranquil and contem-"plative: applying themſelves afterwards only "to ſerious diverſions or games of hazard*." Now Emilius, having been brought up in the uſe of the ſame freedom as young peaſants or ſavages, ought accordingly to take the ſame turn as they, in growing up. All the difference between them is, that inſtead of his acting only with a view to his amuſements or nouriſhment, he hath acquired, together with his labours and diverſions, the advantage of reflection. Arrived, therefore, by ſuch means to this term, we find him properly diſpoſed for that to which I introduce him; thoſe objects of reflection which I preſent to him, excite his curioſity; becauſe they are not only beautiful in themſelves, but alſo becauſe they are new, and at the ſame time ſuch as he is able to comprehend. On the contrary, fatigued and wearied out with your inſipid lectures, your tedious morals and endleſs catechiſms, can it be otherwiſe expected than that your youth ſhould refuſe to give any attention to ſubjects which have been made ſo diſagreeable; to thoſe heavy documents they have been ſo conſtantly plagued with, and even to meditations

* Adventures du Sieur le Beau.

tations on the author of their Being, who hath by ſuch means been made an enemy to their pleaſures? They have conceived a diſguſt and averſion for all theſe topics, and require ſomething new to awaken their curioſity and fix their attention; they muſt be no longer talked to about things they were told of when children. Such is the caſe with my pupil; as he becomes a man, I ſpeak to him as a man, and yet the topics of our converſation are new: thus, for the very ſame reaſon that they are diſguſting to others, they ſhould be pleaſing to him.

In this manner you ſee the double advantage my pupil gains in point of time, by my retarding the progreſs of nature, to the improvement of his reaſon: but have I, in fact retarded that progreſs? No, I have only hindered the imagination from accelerating it; I have only prevented by precepts of a different kind, thoſe premature inſtructions he might otherwiſe receive. When borne along by the torrent of cuſtom on one ſide, to guide him the contrary way, by a different force, is not to thruſt him out of his place, but to keep him in it.

At length nature's time arrives; it is neceſſary it ſhould. As men die, it is neceſſary that children ſhould be begotten; for the continuation of

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our ſpecies and the preſervation of the order of things. When by the tokens I have already deſcribed, you foreſee the critical moment nigh, give up for ever your former manner of converſing with him. He is ſtill indeed your ſcholar, but no longer your pupil. He is your friend; he is a man; treat him therefore, for the future as ſuch.

What! muſt I give up my authority over him, when it is the moſt neceſſary? Muſt I abandon the adult to himſelf at the time when he is leaſt able to conduct himſelf, and is the moſt liable to be led aſtray? Muſt he be deprived of my authority over him, when he ſtands in the moſt need of it?—Your authority! Who hath told you to renounce your authority? I do not know that, till this moment, you have had any over him. Hitherto you have been able to obtain nothing of him, except by cunning or force. Authority, the law of duty, has been unknown to him. But you have now many and various means of engaging his heart; Reaſon, friendſhip, gratitude, and a thouſand other motives of affection, ſpeak to him a language he cannot miſunderſtand. Vice hath not as yet rendered him deaf to their voice. He is as yet ſuſceptible only of natural paſſions. The principal of all theſe, that of ſelf-love, attaches him

to you; and he is confirmed in that attachment by habit. If a tranſient fit of paſſion detach him for a moment, his regret brings him inſtantly back again; the ſentiment which binds him to you is alone permanent; the others are tranſitory and mutually efface each other. Suffer him not to become corrupted, and he will be always docile; he begins not to be intractable till he is already ſpoiled.

I confeſs that, if you directly oppoſe his growing deſires, and fooliſhly treat the new inclinations he perceives within himſelf as criminal, you will not be long attended to; but as ſoon as you reject my method I do not pretend to anſwer for the conſequence. Remember always that you are the aſſiſtant of nature, and you will never be her enemy.

But what method you will ſay muſt be taken? There is but one alternative, either to favour his propenſities or to oppoſe them; either to be his tyrant or his pander; and both are ſo dangerous in their conſequences, that there is ſufficient reaſon to heſitate in the choice.

The firſt expedient that offers to obviate this difficulty, is to marry him as ſoon as poſſible; this is undoubtedly the moſt certain and moſt natural

natural one. I doubt much, however, whether it be the beſt, or the moſt uſeful. I ſhall give my reaſons for this hereafter: in the mean time I agree, that young people ſhould be married as ſoon as they arrive at a marriageable age; but this term may be anticipated; we render it frequently premature, whereas we ought to defer it to years of greater maturity.

If nothing more was required than to liſten to propenſities and follow certain indications, the matter might be ſoon determined; but there are ſo many contradictions between the rights of nature and the laws of ſociety, that, in order to reconcile them, we muſt make uſe of perpetual ſhifts and tergiverſations: a great deal of art is required to prevent ſocial man from becoming altogether artificial.

I imagine, for the reaſons before given, that by the means already preſcribed, and others of a ſimilar nature, we might extend the ignorance of the deſires and purity of the ſenſes till the age of twenty: this imagination is ſo well grounded, that in ſome nations a young man who ſhould part with his virginity before that age would be eſteemed infamous; and authors very juſtly obſerve that ſuch people are remarkable for ſtrong conſtitutions

conſtitutions and a numerous offspring, owing to their continence in youth.

This term may even be ſtill prolonged, and it is not many ages ago ſince nothing was more common, even in France itſelf. Among other notorious examples was that of Montaigne's father, a man, not leſs upright and conſcientious than of a ſtrong and healthy conſtitution, who proteſted he was married a true bachelor, at the age of thirty-three, after having ſerved ſeveral years in the wars in Italy; and we may ſee, in the writings of his ſon, what vigour and gaity the father preſerved when upwards of ſixty. The contrary opinion certainly riſes more from our manners and prejudices, than from a knowledge of the ſpecies in general.

I may lay aſide therefore, entirely the example of our young people, as they prove nothing with regard to thoſe who are educated in a different manner. The term of nature not being ſo certainly fixed on this head, as that it may not be accelerated or retarded, I conceive I may, without treſpaſſing againſt her laws, ſuppoſe Emilius to have reached this term, through my means, in his primitive innocence; and that I ſee this happy term nearly at an end. Surrounded with perils daily increaſing, do what I will,

will, he will ſoon eſcape me. On the firſt occaſion (and this occaſion will ſoon happen) he will follow the dictates of inſtinct; and 'tis an hundred to one but he ruins himſelf. I have ſeen and reflected too much on men and manners, not to know the great influence of this moment over the remainder of his life. If I diſſemble and pretend to ſee nothing of this change, he will take the advantage of my weakneſs; thinking himſelf able to deceive, he will deſpiſe me; and I ſhall become an accomplice in his ruin. If I endeavour to reſtrain him, I ſhall find it too late; he will liſten to me no longer; I ſhall become diſagreeable to him, troubleſome and inſupportable; and he will not be long before he finds means to get rid of me. I have then but one reaſonable method to take; and that is to render him accountable for his actions to himſelf; to guard him at leaſt againſt unforeſeen errors, and to expoſe to him the dangers by which he is ſurrounded. Hitherto I have reſtrained him, by means of his ignorance; at preſent I muſt make uſe of his knowlege to that end.

Theſe new inſtructions are important; it is neceſſary therefore to examine things more deeply. It is now the time for me to give him up, as it were, my accounts; to ſhew him what hath been the employment both of his time and mine;

mine; to make known to him what he is and what I am, what we have each been doing, and the obligations we are under to each other. I ſhould now make known to him the ſeveral moral relations he ſtands in to the world, all the engagements he hath contracted, thoſe which have been contracted with him; the degree to which he is arrived in the progreſs of his faculties, what remains for him to make, the difficulties he will find therein, the means of ſurmounting ſuch difficulties; as well thoſe in which I may ſtill aſſiſt him, as thoſe which he muſt for the future encounter by himſelf; in ſhort, he ſhould be made fully acquainted with his critical ſituation, the dangers that ſurround him, and all thoſe ſubſtantial reaſons which ought to engage him to look carefully to himſelf before he gives himſelf up to his growing deſires.

Remember that to conduct a grown perſon requires we ſhould take contrary methods to thoſe we employed in conducting an infant. Heſitate not to inſtruct him in thoſe dangerous myſteries which you ſo long and ſo carefully kept ſecret from him. Since he muſt be acquainted with them ſome time or other, it is beſt that he ſhould not learn them of others, nor diſcover them himſelf, but of you alone: ſince

ſince he will be obliged to enter hereafter into the combat, it is proper, for fear of a ſurpriſe, that he ſhould be made acquainted with his enemy.

Thoſe young people who are found intelligent in theſe matters, without our knowing how they come by their knowledge, never acquire it with impunity. Such indiſcreet inſtruction, as it could not have a virtuous object, defiles at leaſt the imagination of thoſe who receive it, and diſpoſes them to the vices of thoſe who impart it. Nor is this all, domeſtics too often inſinuate themſelves, by ſuch means, into the good-will of children, gain their confidence thereby, and repreſent their governor as a peeviſh, ill-natured tyrant; and make it the favourite topic of their private converſation to plot againſt him. When a pupil has made ſuch a kind of confidence, his tutor may withdraw; he can be no longer of any uſe.

But wherefore ſhould a child make choice of ſuch confidents, unleſs on account of the tyranny of thoſe who take care of his education? Why ſhould he hide any thing from them, if he were not reduced to it? Why ſhould he complain of them to others, if he had no ſubject of complaint? His governor is naturally his firſt confi-

dent;

dent; we ſee by the eagerneſs with which he runs to tell him his thoughts, that he imagines his very thoughts imperfect, till he has imparted them to his governor. Be aſſured that if a child hath no reaſon to fear your checks or reprimands, he will tell you every thing, and that he is to be truſted with nothing he ought to keep ſecret from you, when we are certain he will keep nothing from you.

What makes me place the greater confidence in my method, is, that in tracing its effects as exactly as poſſible, I ſee no ſituation in the life of my pupil, that does not place him in a favourable view. In the midſt even of thoſe tranſports, into which the force of temperament may hurry him, and wherein revolting againſt the hand that would reſtrain him, he begins to ſpurn againſt my influence; even in thoſe agitations and fits of paſſion, I trace his primitive ſimplicity: his heart as undepraved as his conſtitution, knows not the diſſimulation of vice; neither reproaches nor contempt have rendered him mean or cowardly; nor hath the baſeneſs of fear taught him to diſguiſe his ſentiments. He poſſeſſes all the indiſcretion of innocence, is ſincere without ſcruple, and knows not as yet the uſe of deceit. There paſſes not an emotion in his mind, which is not to be learnt from his

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lips or his eyes; ſo that the ſentiments he entertains are not unfrequently ſooner known to me than to himſelf.

So long as he continues thus freely to open to me his mind, and to take pleaſure in diſcloſing to me his thoughts, I have nothing to fear; but if he becomes more timid and reſerved; if I perceive in his converſation, the firſt embarraſſment of baſhfulneſs and ſhame; inſtinct already diſplays itſelf, there is not a moment to loſe, but if I do not ſpeedily inſtruct him, he will ſoon acquire information in ſpite of me.

It is poſſible that ſome of my readers, though they ſhould adopt my ideas, will think that nothing more is meant by ſuch inſtruction, than the taking an opportunity of mentioning the ſubject in converſation, and that then the whole buſineſs is done. The human heart is not to be governed, however, in ſo eaſy a manner. What may be ſaid will ſignify nothing, unleſs a proper preparation be made for the hearing it. The ſoil muſt be plowed before it is ſown: the plants of virtue alſo are difficult to rear, their ſeeds requiring long cultivation in order to make them take root. One great reaſon why preaching is in general ſo uſeleſs, is becauſe ſermons are delivered indiſcriminately before all ſorts of

people, without diſcretion or choice. How can the ſame ſermon be thought equally proper, to a number of auditors of different diſpoſitions, underſtandings, humours, ages, ſexes, ranks and opinions? There are not two perſons perhaps in the whole, to whom, what is thus indiſcriminately delivered to all, is properly adapted: add to this that our diſpoſitions and affections are ſo inconſtant, that there are not two moments in a man's whole life, in which the ſame diſcourſe would make exactly the ſame impreſſion on him. Judge then, whether at a time when the irritated paſſions impoſe on the underſtanding and tyrannize over the will, it be proper to inculcate the ſober maxims of prudence. Never go to reaſon therefore with young people, even when arrived at the age of reaſon, till you have firſt prepared them properly to hear it. Moſt of the leſſons which are thrown away, are loſt more through the fault of the maſters than through that of their diſciples. The pedant and the preceptor teach nearly the ſame things; but the firſt teaches them at random: and the laſt only when he is ſure they will have their effect. Perſons who walk in their ſleep often tread ſecurely on the edge of a precipice, from which they would fall headlong if they were ſuddenly waked. So hath my Emilius eſcaped many unſeen dangers, in his

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ſleep of ignorance; if I awaken him, however on a ſudden, he might be totally loſt. Let us endeavour therefore, to get him firſt away from the edge of the precipice, and then we may ſhew it more ſecurely at a diſtance.

Reading, ſolitude, and leiſure, with an effeminate and ſedentary life, ſpent among the women and young perſons, afford thoſe dangers which are moſt to be feared at his age. I would divert his attention to other ſenſible objects; and by giving another turn to his thoughts, wean him from that which they might now have begun to take: it is by exerciſing him in ſome laborious employment, that I would check the activity of his imagination. When the hands are employed in labour, the imagination is at reſt; when the body is wearied with fatigue, the heart is not readily inflamed by the paſſions. But the readieſt and eaſieſt precaution is, to bear him off from local danger. I take him away therefore, from town, and from objects of temptation. This, however, is not enough: in what deſert, in what ſavage aſylum will he be ſecure from thoſe dangerous images which will purſue him? It is nothing to ſeparate him from dangerous objects, unleſs I can alſo baniſh the ideas of them from his remembrance, unleſs I can hit upon the art of detaching him from them intirely, and, in a

manner, alſo from himſelf; I might otherwiſe as well leave him where he was.

Emilius has learnt a trade; this, however, is not our preſent reſource, he alſo loves and underſtands agriculture; but the employment of agriculture is not ſufficient in the preſent caſe. The occupations he is verſed in are too eaſy and familiar, ſo that by amuſing himſelf with them, he is in a manner doing nothing; he will be thinking of other things, and his head and hands never labour in concert. He muſt be engaged in ſome other occupation, that will be intereſting on account of its novelty, that will keep up his attention, and induce his application to it; an occupation he will be paſſionately fond of, and to which he will entirely devote himſelf. Now the only one that appears to me likely to be attended with all theſe circumſtances, is hunting. If hunting be in any caſe an innocent amuſement, if it be at any time a proper exerciſe for men, it is in the preſent caſe that we ſhould have recourſe to it. Emilius is poſſeſſed of every qualification proper for this exerciſe; he is robuſt, agile, patient and indefatigable. There can be no doubt that he will ſoon acquire a taſte for it; that he will purſue it with the ardour natural to his age; and forget, at leaſt for a time, thoſe dangerous propenſities which ariſe from a life of

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ſoftneſs and effeminacy. The chaſe hardens the heart as well as the body, and accuſtoms us to blood and cruelty. Diana is deſcribed as an enemy to love; the allegory is very juſt; the languiſhing ſentiments of that paſſion take their riſe only in ſoftneſs and repoſe; violent exerciſes ſuppreſs all tender ſentiments. The lover and the hunter are ſo differently employed amidſt woods and foreſts, that the ſame objects excite very different ideas.

The refreſhing ſhades, the ſecret bowers and pleaſing retreats of the former, are only feeding-places, holds and ſhelter for game, with the latter: where the one hears nothing but the voice of the nightingale and the ſinging of birds, the other is thinking of the noiſe of the horns and cry of the dogs: the one thinks of nothing but nymphs and dryads, the other of nothing but huntſmen, hounds, and horſes. Walk out into the fields with two ſuch different perſons, and you will preſently diſcover by their diſcourſe, that the earth doth not preſent the ſame ſcene to both, and that their ideas have as different a turn as their inclinations and pleaſures.

I can comprehend how thoſe different taſtes ſometimes unite, and in what manner a time is found for all things. But the paſſions of youth

do not thus divide themſelves; give them but one occupation they are fond of, and every thing elſe is preſently forgotten. The variety of our deſires ariſes from that of our knowledge, and the firſt modes of pleaſure we are acquainted with, are for a long time, thoſe only which we purſue. Not that I would have the youth of Emilius ſpent entirely in the purſuit of game, nor do I take upon me to juſtify, in any caſe, that ferocious amuſement; it is ſufficient for me that it may ſerve ſo far to ſuſpend a more dangerous paſſion, as to make him calmly attend to my diſcourſe about it, and to give me time to deſcribe without exciting it.

There are ſeaſons, in human life, ſo intereſting as never to be forgotten. Such is to Emilius that of the inſtructions I am ſpeaking of; which ſhould influence his conduct all the reſt of his life. One of the miſtakes of the preſent age, is to be too abſtracted in our reaſoning, as if men were nothing but intelligence. In neglecting the language of the ſigns which ſpeak to the imagination, we loſe the moſt emphatical of all languages. The impreſſions made by words are always ſlight, and we ſpeak to the heart much better by means of the eyes than of the ears. By endeavouring to attribute every thing to reaſon, we have reduced our precepts into mere words,

words, we have laid no ſtreſs on actions. Reaſon is not an active faculty; it may ſometimes reſtrain, but ſeldom excites, and never inſpires us to do any thing great. To be always reaſoning is the folly of little minds. Great ſouls ſpeak a different language; the language which perſuades and excites to action.

I obſerve that, in theſe modern ages, men have no other influence over each other than what ariſes from power or intereſt; whereas the ancients effected great things by the powers of perſuaſion, becauſe they did not neglect the language of the ſigns. All conventions were made with great ſolemnity, in order to render them inviolable: before the eſtabliſhment of the civil powers, the Gods were the magiſtrates of mankind; it was in their preſence that individuals made their treaties, alliances and promiſes: the face of the earth was the book wherein they preſerved their archives: the rocks, trees and ſtones conſecrated by theſe acts, and rendered reſpectable to uncivilized man, were the leaves of this book, ever open to the public eye. The well dug in ratification of oaths, the oak of Mamre, the hill of the covenant; theſe were the ſimple, but auguſt monuments of the ſacred nature of contracts: no ſacrilegious hand was lifted againſt theſe monuments; and the good faith of

mankind was better ſecured by the force of theſe mute witneſſes than they now are by all the vain rigour of the laws.

In their governments, the pomp of royal power ſtruck awe into the ſubject. The external marks of dignity, the throne, the ſceptre, the purple robe, the crown, the diadem, were looked upon as things ſacred; the perſon adorned with them was held in reverence, and though without ſoldiers to enforce his commands, he had only to ſpeak, in order to be immediately obeyed. Whereas at preſent, when monarchs affect to throw off theſe marks of dignity *, what is the conſequence of it but contempt? The majeſty of Kings has no influence on the minds of their people; they are obeyed only becauſe of their troops,

* The Romiſh clergy have very judiciouſly preſerved theſe marks, and, after their example, ſome republics; among others that of Venice. Hence the Venetian government, notwithſtanding the fall of that ſtate, is ſtill in poſſeſſion of its ancient Majeſty, and of all the affection and adoration of its people; ſo that next to the Pope adorned with his Tiara, there is not a monarch or potentate on earth ſo much reſpected as the Doge of Venice, without power or authority, but rendered reſpectable by wearing a woman's night-cap under his ducal coronet. The ceremony of the Bucentaur, ſo much ridiculed by ſuperficial witlings, would alone animate the Venetian populace to ſhed the laſt drop of their blood, in defence of their tyrannical government.

troops, and the regard of their ſubjects ariſes only from the fear of puniſhment. Kings no longer take the trouble to wear the diadem, nor their nobles their reſpective marks of diſtinction; but they muſt have numerous hands in readineſs to ſee their orders executed. However flattering this may ſeem, it is eaſy to ſee that in the end this change is by no means to their intereſt.

What the ancients effected by the power of eloquence is really amazing; but this eloquence did not conſiſt only in ſtudied harangues; the orator being never ſo powerfully perſuaſive, as when he ſpoke the leaſt. The moſt pathetic language is not that of words but of ſigns; it does not ſpeak of things but exhibits them. The object which we preſent to the ſight, ſtrongly affects the imagination, excites the curioſity, keeps the mind in ſuſpenſe concerning what is going to be ſaid, and very often ſpeaks ſufficiently of itſelf alone. Did not Thraſibulus and Tarquin in cutting off the heads of poppies, Alexander in clapping his ſeal on the lips of his favourite, and Diogenes in walking before Zeno, ſpeak more expreſſively than if they had made each a tedious harangue? What circumlocution had been neceſſary to convey all the meaning of thoſe ſimple actions! Darius, entering Scythia

with his army, received, from the King of that country, a bird, a frog, a mouſe and five arrows. The ambaſſador, who brought them, delivered his preſent and returned without ſpeaking. In our times ſuch a meſſenger would paſs for a fool; this terrible harangue however was in thoſe days well underſtood, and Darius made the beſt of his way into his own country. Had a letter or verbal meſſage been ſent inſtead of theſe emblems; the more menacing the terms the leſs terrible would it have appeared; it would have been looked upon as a bluſtering rhodomontade, which Darius would only have laughed at.

How attentive were the Romans to the language of ſigns! They wore garments peculiar to their different ranks and ages; they had their togæ, and diſtinguiſhing ornaments of various kinds, their roſtrums, their lictors, their faſces, their crowns, ovations, triumphs, &c. all was parade and ceremony; and all had its effect on the minds of the citizens. It was of no little conſequence to the ſtate that the people ſhould aſſemble in one certain place rather than in any other; that they ſhould be in view, or not in view, of the capitol; that they ſhould deliberate on particular days &c. Perſons accuſed of crimes, and candidates for favour, wore diſtinct habits;

bits; the warriors boasted not of their exploits, they shewed their wounds. Let us suppose one of our modern orators haranguing the people on the assassination of Cesar, and endeavouring to excite them to revenge his death; he would doubtless expatiate on the honour of the deed, and give a pathetic description of his bleeding wounds and lifeless corpse. Mark Anthony, however, though not deficient in verbal elocution, did nothing of all this: he brought and placed before them the dead body itself. What Rhetoric!

But this digression leads me insensibly from my subject, as many others have done before, and my ramblings are too frequent to admit them to be long. To return therefore to my subject.

Never enter into formal abstract argumentation with youth. Invest reason with a body, if you would render it perceptible to their view. Let the language of the understanding be enforced by that of the heart, in order to excite their attention. Cold and uninteresting arguments, I say again, may determine our opinions, but they cannot determine our actions; they may induce us to believe, but not to act; we demonstrate what ought to be thought, and not what

ought

ought to be done. If this be true, with reſpect to mankind in general, it is ſtill more ſo with regard to young people, as yet under the influence of their ſenſations, and who do not reflect ſo much as they conceive.

I ſhall take particular care, therefore, even after having made the neceſſary preparation I have been ſpeaking of, not to break abruptly into the apartment of Emilius; to hold a long diſcourſe with him on the ſubject I would inſtruct him in. I ſhall begin with him by working firſt on his imagination, fixing upon the time, place and circumſtances the moſt favourable to the impreſſions I ſhould be deſirous to make on him; I ſhould ſummon all nature in a manner, to be witneſs to our converſation; I would even call upon the ſupreme Being to confirm the truth of my diſcourſe; I would make him the judge between Emilius and me; I would mark the place, the rocks, the woods, and ſurrounding hills, as monuments of the engagements between us, I would aſſume in my looks, my accent, and geſture, all that ardour and enthuſiaſm, with which I would endeavour to inſpire him. I would then ſpeak, and he would hear me; I ſhould be moved, and he would be no leſs affected. In appearing penetrated with a ſenſe of the ſacred nature of my obligations, I would

would render his more reſpectable; I would enforce my arguments with affecting images; I would not tire him out with diffuſe and frigid maxims, but addreſs him in the utmoſt warmth of affection; my arguments, indeed, ſhould be grave and ſententious, but my heart will be fuller than it ever was before. In ſuch a ſituation it is, that I ſhall declare to him what I have done for him: and in that, ſhall make him look upon himſelf as made for me; he will ſee, in the tenderneſs of my affection, the reaſon of all my ſolicitude. What ſurprize! what agitation ſhall I put him in, by changing all at once my language towards him! Inſtead of contracting his mind, by ſpeaking to him always of his own intereſt, I ſhall hereafter only ſpeak to him of mine, which will affect him ſtill more. By this method I ſhall fire his young heart with all thoſe ſentiments of friendſhip, generoſity and gratitude, which I have planted therein, and which it is ſo delightful to cultivate. I will preſs him to my heart, and tenderly weeping over him, ſay, thou art my all, my child, thou art my own work, and on thy happineſs mine depends; if thou ſhouldſt fruſtrate my hopes, thou wilt rob me of twenty years of my life, and wilt bring my grey hairs with ſorrow to the grave. It is thus that young perſons may be rendered attentive, and that we

we deeply impreſs on their minds the remembrance of what is ſaid to them.

I have hitherto endeavoured to give examples of the manner in which a preceptor ought to convey inſtructions to his diſciple on difficult occaſions. I have ſtrove ſeveral times to do the ſame, on the preſent; but after ſeveral attempts, am obliged to renounce it; convinced that the French language is too quaint and prudiſh to ſupport, in a book, the ſimplicity of the primary inſtructions to be given on certain ſubjects.

The French tongue, it is ſaid, is the chaſteſt of all others; for my part, I think it the moſt obſcene; the chaſtity of a language appearing to me not to conſiſt in the ingenious evaſion of groſs expreſſions, but in the not having them to avoid. For to avoid them, it is requiſite we ſhould think of them; and there is no language in which it is more difficult to avoid the indecency of ambiguous expreſſions, than it is in the French. The reader, ever more ingenious in the diſcovery of obſcene meanings than the writer in avoiding ſuch expreſſions, is often ſcandalized at the moſt innocent. How can any thing paſs through unchaſte ears without contracting ſomething of their impurity? A people, modeſt in their manners, have, on the contrary,

proper

proper terms for every thing; and theſe terms are always modeſt, becauſe they are always modeſtly employed. It is impoſſible to conceive a language more modeſt than that of the bible, and that preciſely, becauſe it is the moſt ſimple. To render the ſame expreſſions immodeſt, we have only to tranſlate them into French. What I ſhould ſay on this occaſion to Emilius, would convey no unchaſte or immodeſt idea to his ears; but, that it ſhould appear equally modeſt to the reader, it is neceſſary he ſhould have a mind as chaſte as that of Emilius.

I cannot help thinking that ſome judicious reflections, on the real purity of diſcourſe and the falſe delicacy of vice, might be uſeful in thoſe moral converſations to which this ſubject would naturally tend; for in learning the language of modeſty, we ought alſo to learn that of decorum; and it is very neceſſary that he ſhould know why theſe two languages are ſo widely different. However this be, I maintain that, inſtead of thoſe idle precepts, with which we are prematurely dunning the ears of youth, and which they only laugh at, when they would have been ſeaſonable, we ſhould wait, and prepare them, for the proper time to inculcate them; that we ſhould then diſcloſe to them the laws of nature in all their truth and ſimplicity;

city; at the ſame time annexing to ſuch inſtruction the ſanction of thoſe laws, in the moral and phyſical evils, which the breach of them inflicts on the delinquents; that, in ſpeaking to them of the inconceivable myſtery of generation, we ſhould ſpeak alſo of that charm which the Author of nature has annexed to that act; of that excluſive attachment which renders it ſo delightful; of the obligations of fidelity; of the modeſty attending it, and enhancing every charm; that in ſpeaking to them of marriage, we ſhould not only deſcribe it as the moſt delightful of all kind of ſociety, but as the moſt inviolable and ſacred of all contracts; we ſhould on this ſubject enforce all thoſe reaſons which render this tie ſo reſpectable with all mankind, and bring a curſe and contempt on every one who violates the marriage bed. We ſhould give them a true and ſtriking deſcription of the horrors of debauchery, its ſtupid debaſement, and the inſenſible declivity by which the firſt act conducts to the ſucceeding, and at length involves every one, who treads that ſlippery path, in ruin. By demonſtrating to them, I ſay, that health, ſtrength, courage, virtue, love itſelf, and all the bleſſings of life, depend on our regard to chaſtity; I maintain that we ſhall render it amiable, and make them not leſs deſirable of learning by what means to preſerve it; for chaſtity is

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ever reſpected ſo long as it is preſerved, and is never deſpiſed but when it is loſt.

It is not true that vicious inclinations are invincible, and that we are incapable of ſubduing them, while we are not habituated to their gratification. Aurelius Victor tells us, that many perſons were ſo tranſported with the love of Cleopatra, that they would willingly have ſacrificed their lives for a night's enjoyment of her; nor is the truth of it impoſſible, while they were in the height of their infatuation. But, let us ſuppoſe that the moſt violent of theſe men, one the leaſt capable of ſubduing his paſſions, ſaw before him the apparatus of his torture; being aſſured of periſhing thereby in a quarter of an hour; he would not only become in a moment ſuperior to the ſtrongeſt temptations; but it would coſt him very little trouble to reſiſt them: the ſhocking image which accompanied them would divert his mind from them, and permit him to recover himſelf. It is the indifference only of our will which occaſions our weakneſs; we are always ſtrong enough to perform what we ſtrongly deſire. *Volenti nihil difficile.* Did we but deteſt vice as much as we love life, we ſhould as eaſily abſtain from commiting an agreeable crime, as from a mortal poiſon, that

that ſhould be known to lie concealed in delicious viands.

Whence comes it not to be eaſily ſeen, that, if the leſſons which are given to a young man on this ſubject, are of no effect? It is owing to their not being proper for his age, and that it is always neceſſary to clothe reaſon in ſuch forms as will make it intereſting. Speak to him with ſolemnity when it is neceſſary; but let every thing you have to ſay be ſo far attractive as to engage his attention. Oppoſe not his deſires with moroſeneſs; ſtifle not his imagination but cheriſh it, leſt it ſhould ingender monſters. Speak to him freely of the pleaſures of love, and our intercourſe with women; let him find in your converſation that complacence which is flattering to his young heart; ſpare no pains to induce him to make you his confident, as by that means only you can ever be truly his maſter: When you have done this alſo, you need not be apprehenſive that he will be tired of your converſation; he will be for making you talk to him more than you will be inclined to do.

For my part, if I have taken the neceſſary precautions preſcribed by theſe maxims, and ſhould hold with Emilius ſuch diſcourſe as is proper at this juncture, I have not the leaſt doubt, that he

he will of himſelf attain the point to which I would conduct him; that he will be eager to place himſelf under my guardianſhip; and that with all the ardour peculiar to his years, and with a ſenſe of the dangers by which he is ſurrounded, he will thus apply to me for protection. "O my friend, my maſter and protector! reſume, I pray you, that authority which you are deſirous of reſigning at a time when it is moſt neceſſary for you to exert it. You have hitherto had no power over me but what took its riſe from my weakneſs; you have it now from my voluntary ſubmiſſion; which will render it but the more ſacred. O defend me from the numerous enemies by which I am encompaſſed; and particularly from thoſe deceitful ones which I carry about me; watch over your work, that I may yet remain worthy of you. I will be ever obedient to your laws; or if I diſobey, it muſt be in ſpite of myſelf; preſerve me free, by protecting me from my paſſions, which would enſlave me; prevent me from being ſubjected to their tyranny, and compel me to ſuſtain the maſtery over them, by not obeying my ſenſes, but my reaſon."

When you have brought your pupil to make this conceſſion; (and if you do not, it is your own fault) be careful how you take him at his firſt word;

word; leſt if ever your authority ſhould ſeem too harſh or ſevere, he ſhould think himſelf entitled to caſt it off, under pretence of his having been ſurprized into ſubmiſſion. This then is the proper time for gravity and reſerve, ſuch a behaviour will alſo impreſs him the more, as it will be the firſt time you ever aſſumed it with him.

You will do well to ſay to him, "You are "very ready, young man, to enter into dif- "ficult engagements; it is proper, however, "that you be made acquainted with their na- "ture before you form them: you know not "with what impetuoſity the paſſions hurry "ſuch young men as you, into the abyſs of "vice, under the appearance of pleaſure. You "have not, I know, ſo baſe a mind as ever to "break your faith with me; but how often "will you not repent the having given it me! "How often will you not curſe the man who "loves you, when, to ſnatch you from the "evils that threaten you, he will find himſelf "obliged to wound you to the very heart! "As when Ulyſſes, charmed by the Syrens, "cried out to his conductors to looſen his "bonds, ſo will you, ſeduced by the charms of "pleaſure, wiſh to break thoſe ties by which "you are reſtrained; you will importune me

"with

" with your complaints: you will reproach me
" for my tyranny, even when I am the moſt
" tenderly concerned for your welfare; while
" I am ſtudying only your happineſs, I ſhall
" incur your hate. O, my Emilius, I ſhall
" never be able to ſupport the pain of being
" hateful to you! I ſhould even purchaſe your
" happineſs too dear at this price. Don't
" you ſee, my dear friend, that in obliging
" yourſelf to obey me, you oblige me to govern
" you, to diſregard my own happineſs by de-
" voting myſelf to yours, to regard neither your
" complaints nor your diſpleaſure, and to op-
" poſe inceſſantly both your deſires and my
" own? You impoſe on me a more heavy yoke
" than you bear yourſelf. Before we ſubmit our-
" ſelves to ſuch conſtraint, let us conſult our
" own ſtrength; let us both take time, to reflect
" on this matter; remembering that thoſe who
" are the ſloweſt to promiſe, are the moſt certain
" to keep their word."

Remember alſo yourſelf, well-meaning Preceptor! that the more difficulty you make to enter into ſuch an engagement, the more eaſy you render its execution. It is neceſſary that a young man ſhould be ſenſible that he undertakes a great taſk, and that you alſo engage in a much greater. When the time comes that he

he ſhall have ſigned the contract, if I may ſo expreſs myſelf, you may change your tone: make your government as eaſy, as you have repreſented it ſevere. You may ſay to him, "My young friend, you want experience, but "I have taken care that you ſhould not want "underſtanding. You are now in a capacity "to judge of the motives of my conduct; to "which end you need only wait till your paſ-"ſions ſubſide. Begin, however, always by "your obedience, and afterwards require of "me a reaſon for my commands; I ſhall be "ever ready to do this, when you are in a ſitu-"ation to underſtand me: nor ſhall I ever be "afraid to ſubmit any affair between us to your "deciſion. You promiſe to be tractable, and "I promiſe you never to make uſe of your do-"cility, unleſs to make you the happieſt of "mankind. Your ſecurity in my promiſe, is "the life you have hitherto led. Find me any "other perſon of your age, who hath paſſed "his days ſo agreeably as you have done, and "I will then venture to promiſe nothing."

After having thus eſtabliſhed my authority, my firſt care ſhould be to prevent the neceſſity of making uſe of it. I would ſpare no pains to gain ſtill farther on his confidence, in order to render myſelf the friend of his heart and the arbiter

biter of his pleaſures. So far from oppoſing the inclinations natural to his years, I would conſult them in order to become their maſter: I would enter into his views, that I might be the better able to direct his actions; nor would I be anxious to ſecure his diſtant happineſs, at the expence of the preſent. It is not my deſign that he ſhould be only once happy, but that he ſhould, if poſſible, be always ſo.

It is uſual with thoſe, who would ſecure youth from the ill conſequences of their paſſions, to ſet that of love in a criminal light, to repreſent it as a ſentiment not to be cheriſhed by young people; juſt as if it were a paſſion to be gratified only by the old. None of theſe deceitful leſſons, to which the heart conſtantly gives the lie, can be perſuaſive. Conducted by a more certain inſtinct, a young man ſmiles in ſecret at ſuch gloomy maxims, in which he nevertheleſs pretends to acquieſce, and only waits for an opportunity to prove them of no effect. Such a proceeding, in tutors, is directly contrary to nature. By following an oppoſite method, I ſhall arrive more certainly at the end we both aim at. I ſhall not be afraid to cheriſh that agreeable ſentiment he is ſo choice of; I ſhall deſcribe it, as it really is, to be the ſupreme happineſs of life; and in ſo doing encourage him

to indulge it. In giving him to underſtand alſo what additional charms the union of hearts confers on the pleaſures of ſenſe, I ſhall raiſe in him a diſguſt of licentious pleaſures; and even, while I encourage him to be amorous, make him prudent.

How confined a capacity is that which only diſcovers in the growing deſires of a young man, an obſtacle to the prudential leſſons of reaſon! For my part, they preſent to me the true means of rendering him docile to thoſe very leſſons. We can have no hold of the paſſions, but by means of the paſſions themſelves; it is by their own power we muſt oppoſe their tyranny, and it is always in nature herſelf, that we muſt ſeek the proper inſtruments to regulate her work.

Emilius was not made to live always alone: as a member of ſociety, he muſt diſcharge the obligations he lies under to it. Formed to live among mankind, it is requiſite he ſhould know them. Of man, in general, he is not ignorant; it remains for him therefore to become acquainted with individuals. He knows what is done in the world; it remains for him to know how to live in it. It is time to give him an external view of that grand machine, with the operations of whoſe ſecret ſprings he is already

ready ſo well acquainted. He will no longer regard it with the ſtupid admiration of an ignorant novice; but with the diſcernment of a juſt and clear underſtanding. His paſſions, doubtleſs, will ſometimes miſlead him; for where is the man who is not ſometimes miſled by his paſſions? But he will not, at leaſt, be miſled by thoſe of others: If he regards them at all, it will be with the eye of a philoſopher, without being ſeduced either by example, or by prejudice.

As there is one age proper for the ſtudy of the ſciences, ſo there is another for acquiring a knowledge of the manners of the world. Whoever is brought acquainted with theſe too young, adopts them all his life, without choice or reflection; and though not inſufficiently, yet it is always without knowing what he is about. But he who, in ſtudying manners, enters into the reaſons and motives of them, adopts them with more diſcernment, and conſequently with more grace and propriety. Give me a child of twelve years of age, perfectly ignorant of every thing, and at fifteen I will return him to you as learned as any that you may have earlier inſtructed; with this difference, that the learning of yours will lie altogether in his memory, and the knowledge of mine in his judgment. In the

ſame manner, introduce a youth of twenty years of age, to the world; if well conducted there, he will in a year's time, be rendered more amiably and judiciouſly polite, than if he had been accuſtomed to public life from his infancy: for the former being in a capacity to trace the motives for the reſpective behaviour of perſons of different ranks, ages, and ſex, will be able to reduce good manners to a ſyſtem, and extend its principles to unforeſeen caſes and circumſtances; whereas the other, having no other rule than common practice, if he ſhould ever happen to ſtumble on any new ſituation, would be immediately embarraſſed and know not how to behave.

The young ladies in France are all educated in convents 'till the time of their marriage. Do we ſee that they are then obliged to take any extraordinary pains to adopt the manners, which are nevertheleſs to them ſo very new? or are the Pariſian ladies to be charged with a ſtiff and embarraſſed air, or with being ignorant of the cuſtoms of the polite world, becauſe they were not introduced to it in their infancy? This is one of the prejudices of people in high life, who, knowing nothing of greater importance than this frivolous ſcience, miſtakenly imagine young perſons cannot be initiated therein too early. It

It is certain, however, that they ſhould not, on the other hand, neglect ſuch accompliſhments too long. Thoſe who have ſpent their younger days altogether at a diſtance from the great world, will never ſhake off that air of embarraſſment and conſtraint, which ever attends a clowniſh behaviour; nor will they, by any future commerce with the world, be capable of diveſting themſelves of that impropriety of manners and converſation, which are only rendered the more ridiculous by our efforts to get rid of them. Every kind of inſtruction hath its proper ſeaſon to be choſen, and its peculiar inconveniences to be avoided. It is peculiarly on the preſent occaſion that care ſhould be had to both theſe circumſtances.

When, according to my method, the ſame means anſwer ſeveral ends, and I avoid one inconveniency even in the prevention of another, I conclude I am always right, and that ſuch method is a very good one. What it ſuggeſts to me at preſent, I think confirmed by experience. If I were to be auſtere and contradictory with my pupil, I ſhould forfeit his confidence, and he would ſoon hide his inclinations from me. If, on the contrary, I were to be complaiſant and eaſy, or wilfully to ſhut mine eyes, of what advantage would my guardianſhip

be to him? I ſhould in that caſe only give a ſanction to his licentiouſneſs and quiet his conſcience at the expence of my own. Were I to introduce him to the world, on the ſole plan of inſtructing him, he would ſoon acquire more knowledge, perhaps, than I ſhould chuſe. If I ſhould prevent his ever ſeeing the world, what would he have learned of me! Every thing, perhaps, except that art, which is the moſt neceſſary, as well for the man as the citizen, the art of living among his fellow-creatures. If I ſhould direct his application to objects of diſtant utility, they would not be at all engaging, as he is intereſted in nothing but the preſent moment: again if I content myſelf with only directing his amuſements, of what ſervice am I to him? He grows enervated but acquires no information.

I ſhall therefore, do none of theſe; having one expedient that will anſwer all occaſions. Your heart, ſay I to him, young man, requires a companion; let us go in ſearch of one that is proper for it: we ſhall not perhaps eaſily find her, as true merit is rare, but let us not be impatient, or diſcouraged by diſappointments. Doubtleſs there is ſuch a perſon in the world, and we ſhall find her in the end, or at leaſt one that nearly approaches what we ſeek.

With

With this flattering object in view, I introduce him to the world; what need have I to ſay any thing more? do not you ſee clearly that in this I have done every thing?

I leave you to imagine whether, in deſcribing the miſtreſs I deſign for him, I ſhall not be able to engroſs his attention; whether I ſhall not be able to render thoſe qualities he ought to admire truly amiable, and diſpoſe all his ſentiments to the propriety of what he ought to ſeek or ſhun? I muſt be the moſt incapable of all rhetoricians if I do not make him paſſionately in love, without knowing with whom. It is nothing at all to the purpoſe, that the object I deſcribe is imaginary; it is ſufficient that it ſerve to diſguſt him with thoſe which might otherwiſe actually tempt him: it is ſufficient that the compariſons he will be led to make, induce him to prefer the chimerical object to thoſe which are real: for what is true love in itſelf but chimera and illuſion? We love the image in our fancy much more than the object to which it is applied. Were we to ſee the object of our paſſion ſuch as it really is, there would be at once an end of love. The perſon frequently remains the ſame though our paſſion decays, but we no longer view it in the ſame light. The veil of deluſion falls off and love takes its flight. Now, in forming an ima-

ginary object, I am free to make what comparisons I please, and can easily prevent the illusion of those which are real.

I would not, however, have a young man, for this reason, deceived, by placing before him a model of perfection which cannot exist; but I should make choice of such defects in his mistress as would be agreeable to him, and would serve to correct his own. Neither would I have even the imposition passed on him, of telling him the object described really existed: but if he was delighted with the copy, he would soon wish for the original. From wishing any thing to be and supposing it, is an easy transition; this is the case with some artful descriptions, which, by means of a few striking touches, give to the imaginary object a greater appearance of reality. I would go so far as to give his imaginary mistress a name, I would say to him laughing, let us call your future mistress Sophia; Sophia is a lucky name, and though she should not happen to be of that name, she will be at least worthy of it; we will therefore, give her the honour of it beforehand. After having said thus much without either affirming or denying her existence, if her name should now and then seem to escape you by chance, his suspicions on this head will be confirmed; and

be

he will believe that you keep the perſon of his intended miſtreſs a ſecret from him, and that at a proper time he ſhall be brought acquainted with her. If once he arrive ſo far, and a proper choice is made of thoſe features it may be expedient, to diſplay, all the reſt is eaſy; he may be ventured into the world without danger: defend him only from his ſenſual appetite, his heart is ſecure.

But whether he realiſes the model, I have rendered ſo amiable, or not, yet if ſuch model be well executed, he will be no leſs ready to attach himſelf to whatever may reſemble it, and to avoid what is different, than if it were a real object. How efficacious muſt be this method, to preſerve his heart amidſt the dangers to which his perſon is expoſed; to reſtrain his paſſions by the force of his imagination, and to detach him above all from thoſe well-bred females, who ſet ſo great a value on their politeneſs, and teach a young man good breeding at the expence of his integrity! Sophia is ſo modeſt! with what an eye muſt he regard their advances? Sophia hath ſo much ſimplicity! how can he poſſibly admire their affectation? His notions of female merit are too different from what he ſees, for the latter ever to prove very dangerouſly ſeductive.

All thoſe who ſpeak of the government of children, adopt nearly the ſame maxims and prejudices, becauſe they make but imperfect obſervations, and ſtill more inconcluſive reflections. It is neither the conſtitution nor the paſſions that are the firſt ſeducers of youth, it is opinion and manners. Nay, I could prove this to be true, even with regard to the boys who are educated in colleges, and the girls who are brought up in convents; the firſt leſſons which both attend to, being thoſe of vice; nature doth not corrupt them, but example. But we ſhall leave theſe to their own depraved manners, which are incorrigible. I ſpeak here only of a domeſtic education. Take a young man, modeſtly educated in his father's houſe, in the country, and examine him the moment he arrives at Paris: you will find in him juſt notions of moral virtue and decency, and a will as undepraved as his underſtanding. You will find that he holds vice in contempt, and conceives an averſion to debauchery. At the mention of a proſtitute, you will read in his looks the effects of innocence. I maintain it that no ſuch youth could prevail on himſelf to enter alone the miſerable habitations of thoſe abandoned wretches, even though he knew their uſe, and felt them neceſſary.

Examine

Examine the ſame young man, however, ſix months after, and you will hardly know him again. His libertine diſcourſe and licentious manners would be apt to make you miſtake him for another perſon, if the pleaſantry with which he rallies his former ſimplicity, and his bluſhes on being put in mind of it, did not evince him to be the ſame, and that he is aſhamed of it. How ſoon and ſurprizingly is he new modelled! What can be the cauſe of ſo great and ſudden an alteration? Can it be the progreſs of temperament? Would not this have made the ſame progreſs in the houſe of his father? And yet he ſurely would not there have acquired the ſame manners or maxims! Is it owing to the firſt gratification of the paſſions? that hath a contrary effect. In the firſt indulgence of theſe, we are timid and reſtleſs, preferring ſecreſy and ſilence to noiſe and boaſting. Our firſt pleaſures are ever kept concealed; that modeſty which ſeaſons their delight hides them from the world: the firſt miſtreſs we enjoy, makes us fearful and not impudent. Taken up entirely by a ſituation ſo new to him, the anxious youth enjoys it by himſelf, and is ever apprehenſive of loſing it. If he be boaſtful and loud, he is neither paſſionate nor tender; the more he avows, the leſs is his enjoyment.

A different manner of thinking only hath effected this difference of behaviour. His heart is ſtill the ſame; but his opinions are altered. His ſentiments, more ſlow to change, will, indeed, be perverted in time, and then he will be totally corrupted. He is hardly entered upon the world, before he is ſubjected to a ſecond education, directly contradictory to the firſt; by which he is taught to deſpiſe what he before eſteemed, and to eſteem what he deſpiſed: he is taught to regard the leſſons of his parents and tutor as pedantic jargon, and the duties they inculcated as a puerile morality which he ought to diſdain when he is grown up. He thinks himſelf obliged in honour to alter his conduct; he becomes licentious without deſires, and impudent through falſe modeſty. He ridicules virtue and decorum before he can take pleaſure in vice, and piques himſelf on his debaucheries before he is actually debauched. I ſhall never forget the frank confeſſion of a young officer in the Swiſs guards, who was always greatly diſguſted with the riotous pleaſures of his comrades, and yet durſt not abſent himſelf from their parties for fear of their raillery. "I uſe "myſelf to them, ſaid he, againſt my incli- "nation, as a man learns to chew tobacco; I "may thus probably acquire a taſte for them "in time, one muſt not be always a child."

Thus

Thus it is leſs from ſenſuality than from vanity that we ought to guard a young man on his entrance into the world; he is more ſubſervient to the inclinations of others than to his own, ill example making more libertines than a paſſion for the ſex.

This being granted me, I may aſk if there be a young man in the world better armed againſt whatever may attack his manners, ſentiments and principles, than mine? Is there any one more capable to withſtand the torrent? Againſt what temptation is he not in a ſtate of defence? If his deſires lead him to the ſex, he finds not what he ſeeks, and his heart, already engaged, is his ſecurity. If his appetites are urgent, where will he gratify them? The horror of adultery and debauchery keep him at an equal diſtance from the married woman and common ſtrumpet: and it is always by one of theſe that youth are firſt debauched. A marriageable young girl may be a coquet; but ſhe will not be abandonedly impudent; ſhe will not throw herſelf into the arms of a young man, who might marry her if he thought her modeſt and prudent; beſides ſhe will always have ſomebody to keep an eye on her conduct. Emilius, on his ſide alſo, will not be entirely left to himſelf; both at leaſt will be under the reſtraint of

the fear and ſhame inſeparable from their firſt deſires; they will not proceed at once to the greateſt familiarities, and they will not have time to approach them by degrees without obſtacles. To be able to act otherwiſe, he muſt have taken leſſons of his comrades, and have learnt of them to laugh at reſerve, and become inſolent after their example. But what young man is leſs liable to be miſled by example than Emilius? who can be leſs liable to be perverted by raillery than he, who hath no prejudices of his own, and who regards ſo little the prepoſſeſſions of others? I have laboured twenty years to arm him againſt the force of ridicule; it will require, therefore, ſome time, at leaſt to make him the dupe of it: ridicule is with him the argument of fools, and nothing renders a man ſo inſenſible to raillery, as to be above the influence of prejudice. Inſtead of pleaſantries, they muſt attack him with reaſons; and when they come to thoſe, I am in no fear leſt any young witlings ſhould carry off my pupil; conſcience and truth are both too ſtrongly on my ſide. But if prejudice ſhould interfere, an attachment of twenty years is ſtill ſomething even in that light: he will never be made to believe that I have only been teizing him with futile inſtructions; and with an upright and ſuſceptible heart, the voice of a true and faithful friend is able to prevail over the clamours

clamours of twenty ſeducers. As in ſuch a caſe, nothing more would be requiſite than to ſhew they deceive him, and that in pretending to treat him as a man, they really treat him as a child; I ſhould always affect ſimplicity as well as gravity and preciſion in my arguments; in order that he might perceive it is really I, who treat him as a man. I ſhould ſay to him, "You ſee it is your intereſt, as well as mine, "that influences me, and that as I have no in- "tereſt ſeparate from yours, I can have no "other motive for what I adviſe: but what "motive have theſe young people, in perſua- "ding you to adopt their notions? Doubtleſs "they are ſtriving to ſeduce you; they can "have no regard either for your perſon or your "intereſt; their only motive muſt be a ſecret "malice at ſeeing you more reſpectable than "themſelves; they would debaſe you to their "mean ſtandard, and reproach you for being "governed only, that they may have the "government of you themſelves. Can you "think to be a gainer by ſuch a change? Is "their wiſdom ſo much ſuperior, or is their "attachment of a day's ſtanding ſtronger than "mine? To give any weight to their raillery, "it is neceſſary that we ſhould be able to "give ſome to their authority; and what ex- "perience have they to raiſe their maxims "above ours? They only imitate other licen-

"tious

" tious fools, as they would have you in turn
" imitate them. In casting off the pretended
" prepossessions of their fathers, they only
" subject themselves to those of their comrades.
" I do not see what they get by this conduct,
" but I know they certainly forfeit two great
" advantages by it, that of paternal affection,
" whose counsels are so tender and sincere;
" and that of experience, enabling us to judge
" from what we know; for fathers have been
" children, and children have not been fathers."

" Do you believe, however, that these
" young people are sincere in their foolish
" maxims? No, my dear Emilius, they de-
" ceive themselves in order to deceive you;
" they are not consistent with their own prin-
" ciples. Their hearts give them constantly
" the lie, and sometimes their lips. You shall
" hear one of them turn every thing that is
" modest and virtuous into ridicule; who would
" be driven to despair if his wife should adopt
" the same licentious principles. Another will
" carry his libertinism so far, as to care little
" about the manners of the woman he is going
" to marry, or, still more infamous, those of
" the wife he hath already married; but urge
" him farther, speak to him of his mother, and
" see if he will consent as readily to pass for

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"the baſtard ſon of an adultereſs, for the uſurp-
"er of the name and eſtate of a family to which
"he hath no right! Who is there among
"them would conſent that his own daughter
"ſhould be diſhonoured, as he would diſho-
"nour the daughter of another? There is not
"one of them, who would not be ready to take
"away your life, ſhould you put in practice
"upon him, thoſe principles which he endea-
"vours to inculcate. Hence you may ſee clear-
"ly their inconſiſtency, and that not one of
"them really believes what he ſays. Such are
"my reaſons, my dear Emilius; weigh theirs,
"if they pretend to any, and compare both.
"Should I, after their example make uſe of con-
"tempt and raillery, you would ſee them afford
"a fairer ſubject for ridicule than myſelf. But I
"am not afraid of ſtanding the teſt of a ſerious
"examination. The triumph of the jeſter is
"but of a ſhort duration; the truth will remain,
"when their abſurd laughter is ſilenced."

You cannot imagine that Emilius, at twenty years of age ſhould be ſo docile as I ſuppoſe him! How different are your notions and mine! For my part I cannot conceive how he ſhould be docile when but half that age; for what influence can you then have over him? It hath coſt me fifteen years labour to eſtabliſh ſuch an influence.

fluence. I did not educate him at that early period; I was then only preparing him for education. He is at preſent ſo well prepared as to have acquired docility; he can diſtinguiſh the voice of friendſhip, and knows how to be obedient to reaſon. I leave him, it is true, the appearance of independence; but he was never ſo compleatly ſubſervient; he is now obedient becauſe he is deſirous to be ſo. Till I could gain the aſcendancy over his will, I remained the maſter of his perſon, and quitted him not a moment. At preſent, I leave him ſometimes to himſelf, becauſe my influence over him is conſtant and perpetual. On quitting him, I embrace him, and ſay, with an air of confidence, Emilius, I truſt you with my friend, I give you up to his honeſt heart, and doubt not but he will account for you.

Virtuous affections are not to be depraved in a moment, when they have received no previous alteration; nor are the principles immediately deduced from the firſt dictates of reaſon to be eradicated without time. If I obſerve that any change in either is the conſequence of my abſence, it will never be ſo long, nor will he be ſo far capable of concealing its effects from me, as that I ſhall not perceive the danger before the evil, and be in time to prevent it. As we are

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not totally depraved at once, ſo we learn not all at once to diſſemble: if ever any man was a bad diſſembler alſo, Emilius is ſuch; having never in his life had a ſingle occaſion to diſſemble.

By theſe and other ſimilar means, I imagine Emilius ſo well guarded from foreign objects and vulgar maxims, that I had much rather ſee him in the midſt of a circle of the worſt company in Paris, than alone in his chamber, given up to all the reſtleſsneſs and inquietude of his age. Do what we will, of all the enemies that can attack a young man, the moſt dangerous, and that alone from which we cannot ſeparate him, is himſelf: this enemy, however, is dangerous only through our own fault; for, as I have often ſaid, it is the imagination that inflames the paſſions. Our ſenſual deſires are not, properly ſpeaking, phyſical neceſſities; nay it is not true that they are any real neceſſities at all. If no laſcivious object had ever preſented itſelf to our ſight, if no immodeſt idea had ever entered the mind, this pretended neceſſity had, in all probability, never been felt; and we ſhould have remained chaſte without temptations, without reſiſtance and without merit. We know not what imperceptible fermentations, certain ſights and ſituations excite in the blood of youth, without their being able to account for that firſt in-

quietude,

quietude, which does not eaſily ſubſide nor remain long before it is again excited. For my own part, the more I reflect on this important criſis, and its attendant cauſes, the more I am perſuaded that if a man were brought up in a deſart, without books, without information and without women, he would die immaculate though he ſhould live to the age of Methuſalem.

But we are not ſpeaking here of a ſavage of this kind. In educating a man among his equals, and for ſociety, it is impoſſible, it is even improper, to keep him always in this ſalutary ignorance; and the greateſt misfortune attending wiſdom, is to be wiſe by halves. The remembrance of objects once ſtriking, and the ideas of things already acquired, attend us in our retirement, and people our retreats with images more ſeductive than the objects themſelves; rendering ſolitude as fatal to him, who carries with him ſuch company, as it is ſalutary to thoſe who are perfectly alone.

Watch carefully therefore over a young man; he will guard himſelf againſt external danger, but it is you who muſt guard him againſt himſelf. Be never abſent from him, night nor day; ſleeping conſtantly in the ſame chamber. Put no confidence in inſtinct, when you have once exceeded

exceeded its bounds. Inſtinct is a ſafe guide when it proceeds alone, but becomes ſuſpicious when mixed with human prejudices and cuſtoms; it muſt not be deſtroyed, but regulated; and that perhaps is more difficult than to ſuppreſs it entirely. It would be extremely dangerous for it to teach your pupil the means of amuſing his paſſions, and ſupplying the opportunities of gratifying them; ſhould he once acquire the knowledge of this deſtructive ſupplement, he would be utterly undone. His body and mind would from that time become enervated, carrying to the grave the deplorable effects of a moſt pernicious habit, the moſt fatal indeed that a young man can be ſubject to. Doubtleſs it would be better for him even to —— If the impetuous deſires of a vigorous conſtitution become invincible, I ſay, my dear Emilius, I pity you; but I ſhould not heſitate a moment what to adviſe; I would not permit the intention of nature to be altogether eluded. If you muſt be under the ſubjection of a tyrant, I ſhould give the preference to that from which I might be able to deliver you. Whatever happen, I ſhall be better able to ſave you from the women than from yourſelf.

Till a youth arrives at the age of twenty years his body is growing, and ſtands in need of all its ſubſtance; continence during that interval

val is prescribed by nature; if he neglects her perscriptions herein, it is at the expence of his constitution. After this term, continence becomes a moral duty; it is of use to teach us the command over ourselves and our appetites; but moral duties have their modifications, their rules and their exceptions. When human weakness renders an alternative inevitable, of the two evils we are to prefer the least; and in every case it is better to commit a fault, than to contract a vicious habit.

You are to observe, reader, that I am not now speaking of my own pupil, but yours; his passions, which you have suffered to ferment, are now become your masters; yield, therefore, openly to their superiority, without disguise. If you know how to display this submission in its full light, he will be less proud than ashamed of it, and you may secure to yourself, by artful management, the right of conducting him when going astray, so far at least as is necessary to make him avoid the most dangerous precipices. It is requisite that the disciple should take no step without his master's knowledge; and it is better that a governor should approve of a fault and be deceived in his own judgment, than that he should be deceived by his pupil, and the fault committed unknown to him. Whatever tu-

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tor conceives he ought to wink at any thing, will find himſelf very ſoon obliged to ſhut his eyes entirely; the toleration of one abuſe brings on another, and before we reach the laſt link of that chain, we ſhall have ſubverted all order, and brought every moral obligation into contempt.

Another error in tutors which I have conſtantly oppoſed, but of which little minds will never correct themſelves, is the affectation of magiſterial dignity, and the pride of paſſing for a faultleſs character in the eyes of their pupils. This method is very wrong. It is ſtrange they do not ſee that, by thus endeavouring to eſtabliſh their authority, they deſtroy it; that in order to gain attention to what is ſaid, the ſpeaker muſt deſcend to the perſons he addreſſes, and that in order to engage the human heart, he muſt be himſelf a man. Theſe faultleſs perſonages are neither affecting nor perſuaſive, ſo that their diſciples always object that it is eaſy for them to oppoſe thoſe paſſions they do not feel. Keep not your own foibles too much a ſecret from your pupil, if you have a mind to cure him of his. Let him obſerve in you the ſame ſtruggles he experiences in himſelf; let him learn to overcome himſelf by your example, and not have it to ſay, with other young people, "theſe old folks, vexed that they are no longer young,

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want to treat us, that are young, like themſelves; and, becauſe they have no deſires, they make a crime of ours."

Montaigne ſays, he one day aſked M. de Langey, how many times he had been drunk for the King's ſervice, during his negociations in Germany? In the ſame manner, I would aſk the tutor of a young gentleman, how often he had been in a brothel, for the ſervice of his pupil? How often? No. I miſtake. If the very firſt time doth not deprive the young libertine of the deſire of ever entering ſuch a place again; if remorſe and ſhame be not the conſequence; if he doth not come and pour into your boſom a torrent of tears; give him up at once; he is no better than a monſter, or you no better than an idiot; you can never be of any ſervice to him. We ſhall paſs over theſe dangerous expedients, however, as having nothing to do with our ſyſtem of education.

What precautions you will ſay are to be taken with a young man of a good family, before he is expoſed to the corrupt manners of the age! Theſe precautions are doubtleſs laborious and troubleſome; but they are indiſpenſible: It is the neglect of them that is ſo ruinous to all our youth: it is owing to the debaucheries of their earlier

earlier years that men are ſo much degenerated, and that we ſee them what they at preſent are. Baſe and cowardly even in their vices, they betray that littleneſs of ſoul, which ariſes from the early debilitation of the body; and have hardly ſo much life in them as to move about. The pitiful refinement of their thoughts diſplays the ſuperficiality of their minds; they are ſtrangers to grand or noble ſentiments, and poſſeſs neither ſimplicity nor vigour. Abject in every thing, and mean as they are wicked, they have not the courage even to be great in their wickedneſs. Such are the deſpicable race of mortals that compoſe the majority of our youth; ſo that ſhould there be one among them who hath lived temperate and ſober, who hath preſerved himſelf, from the contagion of example, he will, at thirty years of age, be able to cruſh the whole tribe of inſects, and become their maſter with leſs trouble than it coſt him to remain his own. Emilius may be ſo, if he will; but he will diſdain them too much even to hold them in ſubjection.

At preſent, behold my pupil entering on the world, not with a view to diſplay his ſuperiority, but to acquire a knowledge of life, and to find out a companion worthy of him. Whatever be his rank, or to whatever ſociety he is firſt introduced,

duced, his outſet will be modeſt and ſimple: God forbid he ſhould be ſo unhappy as to diſtinguiſh himſelf at firſt above his equals: the qualifications which ſooneſt ſtrike us are not thoſe of Emilius; he neither poſſeſſes nor deſires to poſſeſs them. He has too little value for even the judgment of mankind to ſet any on their prejudices; and he is never deſirous they ſhould eſteem before they know him.

In his behaviour he is neither baſhful nor vain, but ingenuous and ſincere; he knows no reſtraint nor diſguiſe; acting with the ſame freedom in the midſt of an aſſembly as if he were alone. But is he on this account rude, diſdainful or inattentive to others? Quite the contrary; if in a life of ſolitude he ſhould give himſelf no concern about others, is that a reaſon he ſhould do ſo when living amongſt them? He does not, indeed, affect to prefer them to himſelf in his behaviour, becauſe he really does not ſo in his heart; but then he as little affects an indifference which is equally foreign to it: if he knows nothing of the formalities of artificial good-breeding, he hath all the natural politeneſs of humanity. He cannot bear to give any one pain; at the ſame time he will offer no one his place out of mere ceremony, though he will very readily give it up out of good-nature, if

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he ſees any one neglected and thinks him mortified by ſuch neglect; for it would hurt Emilius leſs to remain ſtanding, by choice, than to ſee any one elſe remain ſo on compulſion.

Although Emilius hath no eſteem for mankind in general, he doth not ſhew any contempt for them, becauſe he laments and pities them. As he cannot give them a taſte for what is really eſtimable, he leaves them to the contented enjoyment of their own opinions, leſt if he ſhould deprive them of their imaginary pleaſures, he ſhould only make them ſtill more unhappy. He is, therefore, prone neither to diſputation nor contradiction; on the other hand, alſo, he is neither complaiſant nor ceremonious; he gives his own opinion without controverting that of others; becauſe he prefers liberty to every thing, and accounts freedom one of his moſt valuable privileges.

He ſpeaks little, becauſe he does not covet the notice and attention of others; for the ſame reaſon it is, that his diſcourſe is never uſeleſs nor frivolous. Emilius knows too much to be a great talker. Much ſpeaking ariſes either from a pretenſion to wit, or from the great conſequence in which we hold mere trifles, fooliſhly believing other people think as much of them as

we do. The man who knows things ſo well, as to hold them in due eſtimation, never ſpeaks too much; he judiciouſly eſtimates alſo the attention which is paid him, and the intereſt his hearers may have in his diſcourſe. Generally ſpeaking, thoſe peeple who know little talk much, and thoſe who know much talk little: it is natural for a blockhead to think the little he knows important, and to tell it to all the world. But the man of knowledge does not open his packet ſo readily: he hath too much to ſay, and is ſenſible that much more may be ſaid after him; he therefore remains ſilent.

So far from being offended at the manners of others, Emilius very readily conforms to them; not with a view to appear verſed in the cuſtoms of the world, or to give himſelf an air of politeneſs; but, on the contrary, merely to avoid rendering himſelf diſtinguiſhed or particular; being never ſo much at his eaſe, as when no notice is taken of him.

At his firſt entrance in the world, he is doubtleſs an abſolute ſtranger to its cuſtoms: he is on this account, however, neither timid nor baſhful. If he doth not thruſt himſelf forward in company, it is not through the effect of embarraſſment,

barraſſment, but becauſe, he muſt be unnoticed himſelf, if he would take notice of others: And as to what he may himſelf be thought of, he is under no concern about it, nor is he, in the leaſt afraid of being ridiculed. Being hence always tranquil and indifferent, he is never under the perplexity of a falſe modeſty. Whether he is himſelf regarded or not, he does every thing in the beſt manner he is able; and being always at liberty to obſerve the actions of others, he acquires their manners with a facility, which the ſlaves of prejudice have not to boaſt. It may be affirmed that he will ſooner learn the cuſtoms of the world, for the very reaſon that he thinks them of ſo little importance.

Be not deceived, however, by the complacence of his looks, to compare him with the civil young foplings of the age. He is reſolute, but not ſelf-ſufficient; his manners are free, but not ſupercilious; an air of inſolence belongs only to ſlaves; independance is a ſtranger to affectation: I never ſaw a man of a truly proud mind, betray it in his behaviour: this affectation is peculiar to the vain and abject, who have no other means of exerting authority. I remember ſomewhere to have read, that a foreigner coming one day into the dancing-ſchool of the celebrated Marcel, the latter aſked him what coun-

tryman he was. "I am an Engliſhman," replied the ſtranger. "You an Engliſhman!" returned the dancing maſter, impoſſible! "Can you be a native of that iſland, whoſe natives ſhare in the public adminiſtration, and conſtitute a part of the legiſlature? No, Sir, that down-caſt look and ſhuffling gait betray you to be the titled ſlave of ſome petty German elector."

I know not whether this concluſion diſplayed any great knowledge, in the true relation between internal character, and exterior deportment. For my own part, who have not the honour to be a dancing-maſter, I ſhould have drawn a very different one. I ſhould have ſaid, "This Engliſhman is no courtier, I have never heard that courtiers have a down-caſt look and ſhuffling gait: but a man may ſeem aukward and timid in a dancing-ſchool who would appear quite the contrary in the houſe of commons." Marcel muſt ſurely have taken all his own countrymen for ſo many ancient Romans!

When we love others we are deſirous of being reſpected by them: Emilius reſpects his fellow-creatures, and therefore is deſirous of pleaſing them. The like reaſon prevails ſtill in a greater degree in regard to the fair ſex. His age, his morals, his deſign, all concur to increaſe that deſire in reſpect to them. I ſay, his morals;

rals; for theſe contribute not a little; men of good morals are the true admirers of the women. They may not have the ſame jargon of gallantry, but their aſſiduities are more ſincere and tender. I ſhould know a man of good morals, in the company of a young woman, from an hundred thouſand debauchees, in the ſame ſituation. Judge then what Emilius ought to be, with a conſtitution unblemiſhed, and ſo many motives to reſtrain it. He will, no doubt, be often timid and embarraſſed in the company of the ladies: this embarraſſment, however, will not diſpleaſe them, as the leaſt coquettiſh among them too often take a pleaſure in obſerving and increaſing it. Again his ſolicitude will take a different form according to the age and circumſtance of the parties: thus he will be more modeſt and reſpectful in the company of married women, and more lively and tender in that of the young and unmarried. He never loſes ſight of the object of his reſearches, and beſtows accordingly the greateſt attention on ſuch things as call it to mind.

Nobody can be more exact, in the obſervance of every thing that is dictated by nature, or even of every thing relative to the good order of ſociety; but he will prefer the firſt always to the laſt, and will ſhew a greater reſpect to a private

perſon, if older than himſelf, than he would even to a magiſtrate of his own age. As he is at preſent, therefore, moſt commonly the youngeſt perſon in the company, he is conſtantly one of the moſt modeſt; and that not from the vanity of appearing humble, but from a natural ſentiment, ſupported by reaſon. He will have none of thoſe impertinent pretenſions to the knowledge of the world, which excite young coxcombs, by way of amuſing the company, to interrupt, and talk louder than perſons much older and wiſer than themſelves. He will not on his part, authoriſe the anſwer that was given by an old gentleman to Louis XV. who aſked him which he preferred, the laſt age or the preſent? "Sire, I ſpent my youth, in paying a reſpect to old men; and I am obliged to paſs my age, in paying a reſpect to children."

Having a ſoul ſuſceptible and tender, but eſtimating nothing by the ſtandard of common opinion, although he loves to give pleaſure to others, he gives himſelf no concern to be held in conſideration by them. Hence it follows that, being more affectionate than polite, he will never give himſelf the airs of pride or affectation, and that he will be more touched by one cordial embrace, than by a thouſand encomiums. For the ſame reaſons, he will not be

negligent

negligent of his carriage or behaviour; nay he may even take ſome pains in dreſs; not with a view, however, to be thought a man of taſte, but to render his perſon the more agreeable; he will never have recourſe to the gilt frame, nor will any mark of wealth ever defile his garment.

It is eaſy to be ſeen that nothing of all this requires me to diſplay a parade of precepts; it being only an effect of his former education. A great myſtery is made of the cuſtoms of the world, as if we ſhould not naturally fall into thoſe cuſtoms at a proper age; or as if the firſt rules of good-breeding were not deduced from ſincerity and good nature. True politeneſs conſiſts in teſtifying our benevolence for mankind; it diſplays itſelf of its own accord where it exiſts: it is for thoſe only, who have it not, to learn the art of counterfeiting its appearances.

"The moſt unhappy effect of faſhionable politeneſs, is that it teaches us the art of diſpenſing with the virtues it imitates. Let us be educated to cheriſh the principles of benevolence and humanity, and we ſhall have politeneſs enough, or ſhall ſtand in no need of it."

"If we ſhould not have that which is accompanied by the graces, we ſhould have that which beſpeaks the honeſt man and the good citizen; we ſhould ſtand in no need of having recourſe to the falſhood of appearances."

"Inſtead of being artificially complaiſant in order to pleaſe, it will be ſufficient to be good; inſtead of being falſe, and flattering the foibles of others, it will be enough to be indulgent to them."

"Thoſe with whom we proceed, alſo, in this manner, will be neither vain nor depraved by it: they will become only grateful and corrected."

It ſeems to me that, if any method of education can be productive of the politeneſs here required by M. Duclos, it is that which I have here been tracing.

I own, nevertheleſs, that, from being taught maxims ſo very different to thoſe which generally prevail, Emilius will never behave altogether like the reſt of the world; and indeed God forbid he ever ſhould; but in whatever he differs from others, he will be neither diſ-

agreeable

agreeable nor ridiculous; his ſingularity will be apparent, but never troubleſome. Emilius will be, if you will have him ſo, an agreeable ſtranger. His ſingularities will be, at firſt, overlooked, on the ſuppoſition of his *improving himſelf*; and when you are afterwards accuſtomed to his behaviour, and ſee it is not changed, you will overlook it alſo, with obſerving that *it is his way*.

He will not be courted and entertained as an agreeable man, but he will be loved and reſpected without your knowing why. Nobody will compliment his wit, but every one will be ready to make him the umpire between thoſe who are allowed to have the moſt. As he is not perpetually hunting after new ideas, he does not pique himſelf upon his genius. I have made him ſenſible that all the ideas which are ſalutary and truly uſeful to mankind, are the moſt obvious; that theſe, at all times, form the real bonds of ſociety, and that it belongs to ſuperior geniuſes to diſtinguiſh themſelves only by notions pernicious to themſelves, and fatal to mankind. Such a manner of diſtinguiſhing himſelf, therefore, doth not excite his emulation. He knows where he ought to look for his own happineſs, and in what he may contribute to the happineſs of others. The ſphere of his knowledge extends no farther than to what is profitable. His path

is ſtrait and well-bounded; being under no temptation alſo to leave it, he remains unobſerved in the number of thoſe who purſue the ſame tract. Emilius is a man of common-ſenſe, and deſires to be nothing more; you may think to depreciate him by ſuch an appellation; he will always think himſelf honoured by having it beſtowed on him.

Although the deſire of pleaſing doth not henceforward permit him to be abſolutely indifferent about the opinion of others; he lays no other ſtreſs on ſuch opinion than as it relates immediately to himſelf, without taking any notice of thoſe arbitrary eſtimations, which have no other foundation than faſhion or prejudice. He will be ambitious to acquit himſelf well of every thing he attempts; and even to acquit himſelf better than any one elſe. At running he will be more ſwift, at wreſtling more active and ſtrong, at work more dexterous, and at games of ſkill more artful; but he ſtudies little thoſe advantages which are very obvious in themſelves, or require confirmation from the judgment of others, ſuch are thoſe of having more wit than another, of being more eloquent, more learned, and the like; and ſtill leſs is he covetous of thoſe which are not immediately attached to his perſon, as the advantage of a more

more illuſtrious birth, of being thought more wealthy, of appearing more important, or impoſing on the world by ſplendour and magnificence.

As he loves mankind, becauſe they are his fellow-creatures, he will have the greateſt eſteem for thoſe who moſt reſemble himſelf; and judging of that reſemblance from a conformity of taſte in reſpect to moral objects, he will be very glad alſo to be approved by them, in every thing regarding his moral character. He will not ſay indeed, I rejoice that I am approved by them, but I rejoice that what I have done well, meets with their approbation: I am glad that thoſe who honour me, do themſelves honour in ſo doing; while they continue to judge ſo ſenſibly, it is a deſirable thing to obtain their eſteem.

In ſtudying mankind from their manners in the world, in the ſame manner as he did heretofore from their paſſions in hiſtory, he will meet with frequent opportunities of reflecting on thoſe things which flatter or diſguſt the human heart. Hence he will begin to philoſophize on the principles of taſte, a ſtudy properly adapted to this æra of his life.

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The more refined and abſtracted, the more falſe are our definitions of taſte. Taſte is nothing more than the faculty of judging what is pleaſing or diſpleaſing to the majority. Depart from this definition, and we no longer know what taſte is. It does not hence follow that the majority are perſons of taſte; for notwithſtanding the majority judge ſenſibly of every object, there are few perſons who judge in the ſame manner on all; and although the concurrence of the more general modes of taſte conſtitute a good one, there are but few perſons of taſte; as there are but few beautiful perſons, notwithſtanding the aſſemblage of the moſt common features conſtitutes beauty.

It muſt be obſerved that, we are not here ſpeaking of what we love, becauſe it is uſeful to us, or hate becauſe it is hurtful. Taſte is exerciſed only on matters indifferent, or at moſt barely amuſing; and not on thoſe which depend on our neceſſities: taſte is not required to judge of the latter; appetite and inclination are ſufficient. This it is that renders the deciſions of pure taſte ſo difficult, and as they ſeem to me ſo arbitrary; for ſetting aſide inſtinct which determines it, I can ſee no motive for its deciſions. We ought further to diſtinguiſh between the rules of taſte in morals, and in phyſics. Thoſe

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of the latter appear to be abſolutely inexplicable; but it is proper to obſerve that moral conſiderations enter into every thing that depends on imitation: * thus we ſometimes account for beauties, which appear to be phyſical, and really are not ſo. I may add that taſte has its local regulations, which make it dependent, in a thouſand inſtances, on climate, manners, and government; that it has others which depend on age, ſex, and character; and that it is in theſe matters that there is no diſputing about taſte.

Taſte is natural to all mankind; but they have it not univerſally in the ſame proportion; it does not diſplay itſelf equally in individuals, and it is in all ſubject to alteration from various cauſes. The proportion of our taſte depends on that of our natural ſenſibility; its form and cultivation depend on the ſocieties we have lived in, or company we have kept. In the firſt place, it is requiſite to live in a very numerous ſociety, in order to make many compariſons: ſecondly, it is requiſite they ſhould be ſocieties of diſſipation and amuſement; for in thoſe of buſineſs, men are governed not by pleaſure but profit: in the third place, there either ſhould not be too great an inequality of condition in ſuch

* This is proved in an eſſay, on the principles of harmony, inſerted in the collection of my writings.

ſuch ſocieties, or the influence of cuſtom ſhould be moderate, or pleaſure ſhould be more prevalent than vanity: for otherwiſe the mode ſuppreſſes taſte, and the object of reſearch is not that of pleaſure but of diſtinction.

In the latter caſe it is no longer true that a good taſte is that of the majority. And why ſo? Becauſe its object is changed. The multitude have no longer a judgment of their own; they judge only after others whom they think more enlightened than themſelves; they approve, not what is deſerving, but what is already approved. In all times and places, let every man judge for himſelf; and what appears to him moſt agreeable will have the plurality of ſuffrages.

No artiſt can execute any thing beautiful but by imitation. All the models of true taſte are to be found in nature. The farther we depart from this maſter the more prepoſterous are our deſigns; as, in that caſe, we deduce our models from ſuch objects as happen to delight us; and the beauty of imagination, ſubject to prejudice and caprice, is nothing more than that which pleaſes thoſe who direct us.

The directors of our taſte are the connoiſſeurs, the great and the wealthy; and theſe are direct-

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ed by their intereſt or their vanity; the latter to make a diſplay of their riches, and the former to make a profit, by inducing us to new modes of expence. By this means luxury eſtabliſhes its influence, and makes us admire whatever is difficult or coſtly; the pretended beautiful, ſo far from imitating nature, being eſteemed ſuch only becauſe it is unnatural. Thus luxury and bad taſte are inſeparable: for wherever the taſte be coſtly it is falſe.

It is particularly in the connection between the ſexes that our taſte, whether good or bad, is formed; its cultivation being the neceſſary effect of the object of that connection. But the facility of enjoyment leſſens the deſire of pleaſing: the taſte of courſe degenerates; and this appears to me another very plain reaſon why good taſte depends ſo much on good morals.

Conſult the taſte of the women in matters merely phyſical, or thoſe which depend on the judgment of the ſenſes: conſult that of the men in morals, or thoſe matters which depend more on the underſtanding. Were the women ſuch as they ought to be, they would confine themſelves to things of which they were competent judges, and their judgment would be always right; but ſince they have ſet themſelves up for critics

critics and arbiters in literature, they no longer know any thing. The authors who conſult our learned ladies in the compoſition of their works, are ſure to be ill-adviſed, as the beaus who conſult them about their cloaths, are as ſure to be ridiculouſly dreſſed. I ſhall have occaſion, by and by, to ſpeak of the real talents of the ſex, of the manner of cultivating them, and of thoſe things on which their deciſions ought then to be attended to.

Such are the elementary conſiderations, which I lay down as principles, in reaſoning with my Emilius, on a ſubject that is far from being indifferent to him in his preſent circumſtances, and to the reſearch he is now employed in: and indeed to whom ſhould ſuch a ſubject be indifferent? The knowledge of what is agreeable or diſagreeable to mankind is not only neceſſary to him who ſtands in need of them, but alſo to him who is deſirous of being uſeful to them: it is neceſſary to know how to pleaſe, in order to be uſeful to mankind; and the art of writing agreeably is far from being an uſeleſs ſtudy, when it is employed in recommending the voice of truth.

If, in order to cultivate the taſte of my pupil, I had it in my power to make choice of a country, where the cultivation of taſte was juſt commenced,

menced, or of another where it was already degenerated; I would follow the contrary order, beginning with the laſt, and ending with the firſt. My reaſon for this conduct is, that taſte degenerates through an exceſſive delicacy, which renders us ſenſible of many things, of which the generality of mankind are not ſuſceptible: this delicacy leads to the ſpirit of diſcuſſion; the more we refine upon objects the more they multiply; this refinement rendering the ſenſe more delicate and leſs uniform.

In this caſe there ariſe as many different taſtes as perſons; while in our diſputes about the preference of them, learning and philoſophy diſplay themſelves; and thus it is we are taught to think. Refined obſervations can never be made but by perſons of extenſive knowledge, in as much as they ſucceed to all others; and the attention of thoſe people who are but little accuſtomed to numerous ſocieties is taken up by the more obvious and ſtriking. There is not at preſent a civiliſed place in the world, perhaps, where ſo bad a taſte prevails in general as at Paris. It is in this capital, nevertheleſs, that good taſte is cultivated; there appearing few books held in any eſtimation in Europe, whoſe authors have not formed their taſte at Paris. Thoſe who imagine it ſufficient to read the books which are written there, are miſtaken;

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there is much more to be learned from the converſation of authors than from their books; and even authors themſelves are not thoſe perſons of whom the moſt is to be learned. It is the ſpirit of ſociety which ſets thinking minds at work, and extends their views as far as they can go. If you have the leaſt ſpark of genius, go and ſpend a year at Paris; you will ſoon arrive at all you are capable of being, or you will never come to any thing.

We may learn to think juſtly in places where a bad taſte prevails; but we muſt not think in the ſame manner as thoſe who have ſuch a bad taſte; and it is very difficult to abſtain from this, when we reſide long among them. We ought to improve by their means the faculties of thinking, without employing thoſe faculties in the ſame manner. I ſhall be cautious, therefore, not to poliſh the taſte of Emilius till it alter its form: but, when once he has acquired a ſenſibility refined enough to perceive and compare the different taſtes of others, I ſhall bring him back to the moſt ſimple objects, in order to confirm his own.

I ſhall go farther ſtill, in order to preſerve his taſte from being depraved by example; holding with

with him, even amidſt the tumult of diſſipation, ſuch uſeful converſation and directing it to ſuch pleaſing objects, that it cannot fail of being rendered both amuſing and inſtructive. This is the time for reading, and making choice of entertaining books. This is the time to teach him how to analyze a fine diſcourſe, and make him ſenſible of the beauties of eloquence and diction. To acquire the languages merely for their own ſake is a trifle; their uſe is not ſo important as is generally imagined, the ſtudy of them, however, leads to a knowledge of grammar in general. To underſtand the French perfectly we ought to learn Latin, we ought to ſtudy and compare the one with the other, to comprehend the rules of the art of ſpeaking.

We may add to this, that there is a certain ſimplicity of taſte, which affects the heart, and is to be found only in the writings of the ancients. We find them replete with knowledge, and ſound in judgment, as well in treating of rhetorick, poetry and all kinds of literature, as they are in hiſtory itſelf. Our modern authors, on the contrary, make uſe of many words and ſay but little. To make their judgment perpetually a law for us, is not the way to form ours. The difference between the ancient and modern taſte is evident in all public monuments and even

even on the tombs. Ours are covered with elogiums, on theirs we read nothing but facts:

Sta, viator, Heroem calcas.

Had I even found this epitaph on an ancient monument, I ſhould immediately have gueſſed it to have been modern; for nothing is ſo common as heroes among us, and nothing was ſo rare among the ancients. Inſtead of telling us the man was a hero, they would have ſimply related his actions. Compare the epitaph of an hero with that of even the effeminate Sardanapalus:

I built TARSUS *and* ANCHIALE *in a day, and now I am dead.*

Which of theſe two epitaphs, in your opinion, is the moſt expreſſive? The inflated ſtyle of our ſtatuaries is good for nothing but to puff up pigmies. The ancients deſcribed men of their natural ſize, and we ſee they were men. When Xenophon did honour to the memory of thoſe warriours, who were ſlain by treachery, in the retreat of the ten thouſand, he ſays, *they died irreproachable in war and in friendſhip:* and this is all; this laconic and ſimple eulogy may ſerve to ſhew the ſentiments of which the writer's heart was full; and indeed that reader is to be pitied who is inſenſible to the beauty of this encomium.

The following inſcription was cut on a marble at the ſtraits of Thermopylæ:

" *Go, traveller, and ſay at* SPARTA *that we*
" *periſhed here, in obedience to her laws.*"

It is obvious enough that the academy of inſcriptions had no hand in this compoſition. I am much miſtaken if my pupil, who ſets ſo little value on words, does not ſoon remark this difference; and if it doth not influence him in his choice of books. Tranſported with the manly eloquence of Demoſthenes, he will ſay, this was an orator; whereas in reading Cicero, he will ſay, this was a lawyer.

Emilius will, in general, have more taſte for the ancient writers than for the moderns: were it for no other reaſon than that the ancients, being the firſt, are the neareſt to nature, and their genius is more peculiarly their own. Whatever may have been ſaid by La Motte and the Abbe Terraſſon, there is no real progreſs in the underſtanding of the human ſpecies, becauſe what we gain on one ſide we loſe on the other; and becauſe individuals all ſet out from the ſame point, and the time which is taken up in learning what others have thought, being deduced from that they ſhould have employed in learning to think for themſelves, they poſſeſs more acquired knowledge and leſs force of genius

nius or capacity of reaſoning. Our minds, like our hands, are accuſtomed to do every thing by means of implements, and nothing of themſelves. Fontenelle uſed to ſay, that the famous conteſt concerning the ſuperiority of the ancients and the moderns, was nothing more than a diſpute whether the trees were formerly of a larger ſize than they are at preſent. But if cultivation was ſuppoſed to have changed their magnitude, this diſpute was by no means ſo impertinent as he meant to inſinuate.

Having thus made my pupil recur to the genuine ſources of pure literature, I next give him a view of its muddy ſinks and ſewers, in the repoſitories of modern compilers; in journals, tranſlations and dictionaries. He juſt caſts an eye over theſe, and throws them aſide, never to take them up again. For the ſake of diverting him, I bring him acquainted with the pompous tranſactions of our academies; leading him to obſerve that each individual of which they are compoſed, is ever more ingenious and uſeful alone, than as a member of thoſe learned bodies; hence he naturally concludes what is the utility of all theſe fine eſtabliſhments.

I carry him to the theatres, not to ſtudy morals, but taſte; for there it particularly diſplays

plays itſelf to thoſe who are capable of reflection. You have nothing to do, I tell him, with morality here; this is not the place in which to learn it. The ſtage was not erected for the promulgation of truth, but to flatter and amuſe; there is no ſchool in the world where the art of pleaſing, and of captivating the human heart, is better taught. The ſtudy of the theatre leads to that of poetry; as they have exactly the ſame object. If he hath but the leaſt taſte for this art, with what pleaſure will he ſtudy the languages of the poets, the Greek, the Latin and the Italian! Theſe ſtudies will afford him amuſements ſubject to no reſtraint; for which reaſon he will only make the greater progreſs therein; they will prove moſt delightful at an age, and in circumſtances, in which the heart is ſo warmly intereſted in all kinds of beauty formed to affect it. Imagine to yourſelf on one ſide my Emilius, and on the other a young graduate of the college, reading the fourth book of the Æneid, or Tibullus, or the banquet of Plato; what a difference between them! How greatly will the heart of the one be moved by circumſtances that do not at all affect the other! Stop, my dear youth! throw aſide your book, I ſee you are too much affected: I would have you pleaſed with the language of love, but not

ſeduced

ſeduced by it; be ſuſceptible, but be prudent: If you are but one of theſe, you are nothing.

But whether Emilius ſucceeds or not in the cultivation of the dead languages, the Belles-Lettres or poetry, it is of little conſequence. He will be no leſs reſpectable if he knows nothing of all theſe things, nor doth his education depend on ſuch frivolous acquiſitions.

My principal object, in teaching him to be ſenſible of, and to admire, the truly beautiful of every kind, is to fix his taſte and affections, to prevent his natural inclinations from being perverted, and to hinder him from ſeeking thoſe means of happineſs in his wealth, which he ought to find in himſelf. I have ſaid elſewhere, that taſte is nothing more than the art of being ſkilled in trifles, and this is very true; but as the ſatisfaction of life depends on an aſſemblage of trifles, this art is far from being unimportant: it is indeed by this art we are taught to enjoy all the real happineſs in our power. I do not here mean the happineſs attendant on moral virtue, which depends on the good diſpoſition of the mind, but only that which is merely voluptuous and ſenſual, abſtracted from prejudice and opinion.

Permit me, reader, the better to explain this idea, to diſmiſs Emilius for a moment (his heart being too pure to ſerve as a rule for others) and to deduce from myſelf an example, more perceptible and better adapted to the manners of the world.

There are ſome ſtations in life, which ſeem to change the very natures, whether for the better or worſe, of thoſe who fill them. A poltroon, for inſtance, becomes a brave fellow, by entering into the regiment of Navarre: nor is it only in the military order that men acquire the ſpirit of the community, or that ſuch acquirement is for the better. I have ſhuddered an hundred times to think that, if I had the misfortune to fill to day a certain poſt in a certain country, I ſhould almoſt inevitably prove to morrow a tyrant, an oppreſſor, a deſtroyer of the people, hurtful to my ſovereign, and, by my office, an enemy to humanity, to juſtice, and to every kind of virtue.

In the ſame manner, if I were rich, I ſhould have taken all thoſe ſteps which were neceſſary for me to become ſo; I ſhould be, therefore, inſolent and mean, ſenſible and tender of myſelf alone, pityleſs and hard-hearted to the reſt of mankind, a diſdainful ſpectator of the miſeries of the vulgar; for I ſhould give no other appel-

lation to the indigent: that it might be forgotten that I was formerly of the ſame claſs. In a word, I ſhould make my fortune the inſtrument of my pleaſures, which would entirely engage my attention; and ſo far I ſhould reſemble the reſt of the wealthy part of the world.

There is one thing, however, in which I think I ſhould differ from them greatly; that is, I ſhould be more ſenſual and voluptuous than ambitious and vain, and ſhould give myſelf up to the luxury of eaſe, more than to that of oſtentation. I ſhould even be aſhamed to make too great a parade of my wealth, and ſhould think I always heard the envious man, whom I mortified by my ſplendor, whiſpering in the ear of his neighbour; *how fearful is that knave leſt he ſhould not be taken for what he is!*

From amidſt that immenſe profuſion of earthly bleſſings, which preſent themſelves, I would make choice of ſuch as were the moſt agreeable and the moſt eaſily to be appropriated to myſelf. To this end, the firſt uſe of my wealth, would be to purchaſe liberty and leiſure; to which I ſhould add health, if health were to be bought; but as health is not to be purchaſed but by temperance, and, as without health we can have no true enjoyment of life, I ſhould live temperate from motives of ſenſuality.

I would

I would always remain as near to nature as poſſible, in order to gratify the ſenſes ſhe hath beſtowed on me; being well aſſured that the more natural were my enjoyments, the more I ſhould find them real. In the choice of objects for imitation, I ſhould take thoſe of nature always for models; in the gratification of my appetites nature ſhould have always the preference; in matters of taſte I ſhould conſult her ever, and as for my viands, I ſhould always prefer thoſe which nature hath the beſt prepared, and that paſs through the feweſt hands in coming to our tables. I ſhould prevent the adulterations of artifice by rendering them uſeleſs to my gratification. My groſs and childiſh epicuriſm would not enrich my proveditor, nor ſhould I give its weight in gold for poiſon inſtead of wholeſome food. My table ſhould not be ſpread with covers of magnificent traſh and foreign carrion: I would even be laviſh of my own trouble to gratify my ſenſuality, as even the trouble I ſhould take on ſuch occaſions would be in itſelf a pleaſure, and would enhance that which was to come. If I had an inclination to taſte the product of a diſtant part of the world, I would rather go thither after them, like Apicius, than have them brought to me: for the moſt exquiſite of foreign viands always want a ſauce which is not imported with them,

nor can be prepared for them by any cook whatever; *viz.* the air of the climate that produces them.

For the ſame reaſon, I ſhould not follow the example of thoſe who never enjoy themſelves where they are, and ſet the ſeaſons always at variance, and climates at variance with the ſeaſons; who, requiring ſummer in the winter, and winter in the ſummer, go to Italy to ſhiver with cold, and to the north to be burnt up with heat; without reflecting that, while they think to avoid the rigour and exceſs of the ſeaſons, they always feel them moſt in thoſe places where nature has not taught the inhabitants to guard againſt them. For my own part, I ſhould either remain always in one place, or take directly the contrary method: I would enjoy what was moſt agreeable to the ſeaſon, and what was peculiar to the climate; I ſhould enjoy a multiplicity of pleaſures and cuſtoms, all different from each other, and yet agreeable to nature: I would go and ſpend the ſummer in Naples and the winter in Peterſburg; ſometimes fanned by the ſoft breezes as I lay reclined in the cooling grots of Tarentum; at others fatigued with dancing amidſt the illuminations of a palace of ice in Ruſſia.

I would, as well in the ſervice of my table, as in the ornaments of my apartments, imitate

in

in a ſimple manner the varieties of the ſeaſons, and partake of the pleaſures of each without anticipating the ſucceeding. There is ſome difficulty, but no taſte in thus diſturbing the order of nature, in wreſting from her thoſe involuntary productions which ſhe yields with regret, and which, having neither ſubſtance nor flavour, cannot be nouriſhing to the ſtomach or pleaſing to the palate. Nothing can be more inſipid than thoſe productions of nature which are forced and out of ſeaſon; thus it is at an immenſe expence that a wealthy Pariſian, is capable, by means of furnaces and hot-beds, to furniſh his table the whole year round with taſteleſs fruits and inſipid vegetables. With what pleaſure can I eat cherries when it freezes, or melons in the depth of winter, when my palate neither wants moiſture nor refreſhment? Can I prefer the roaſted cheſnut, in the burning heat of ſummer, to currants, ſtrawberries and other cooling fruit, which the earth affords me without any trouble? To cover our chimney-pieces in the month of January with forced vegetation, with pale and ſcentleſs flowers, is not ſo much to add charms to winter as to rob the ſpring; it is to deprive ourſelves of the pleaſure of traverſing the woods, in ſearch of the firſt violet, of eſpying the opening bud and

crying

crying out in a tranſport of joy: "Mortals, "ye are not abandoned, nature lives anew."

In order that I might be well ſerved, I would have few domeſtics; this has been already ſaid and will bear again repeating. A citizen hath more ſervice done him by a ſingle footboy, than a duke by the half-ſcore gentlemen that ſurround him. I have thought an hundred times, of the advantage of having my bottle and glaſs placed beſide me on the table, that I may drink when I pleaſed, whereas at a table beſet with numerous attendants, the call to drink might be twenty times repeated before I ſhould quench my thirſt. Every thing that is done for us by others is always ill done, however they manage it: for this reaſon I would never ſend to my tradeſmen, but go myſelf. I would do this, indeed, for various reaſons: firſt, becauſe I would not have them treat with my ſervants before they had treated with me; and further, that I might make a better choice of the commodities I ſhould buy, and not pay ſo dear for them: I would go among theſe ſort of people alſo for the ſake of an agreeable exerciſe, and to ſee a little what was doing out of my own houſe; I ſhould in this, find ſome recreation, and ſometimes improvement; in ſhort I would amuſe myſelf thus, were it for no other reaſon than the barely moving about; this would be always

always ſomething gained; a too ſedentary life makes us liſtleſs and low-ſpirited; local-motion is a good remedy againſt this evil. Beſides this, porters and footmen are very bad interpreters; I would not have theſe people always between me and the reſt of the world; nor would I go about every where in a carriage, as if I were fearful of being accoſted in the ſtreet. The horſes of a man, who makes uſe of his legs, are always ready: if they are fatigued or ſick, he knows it before any one elſe; and is not obliged to ſtay at home under that pretence, when his coachman hath a mind to make holiday: when he is abroad, alſo, he is not liable to have his patience wearied out by accidents, or to remain blocked up by carriages when he is in haſte to be gone. In ſhort, if no one can ſerve us ſo well as ourſelves, were we as powerful as Alexander, and richer than Cræſus, we ought not to admit of the ſervices of others, except in thoſe things we cannot perform ourſelves.

I would not chuſe to inhabit a palace, for in this palace, I ſhould occupy but one apartment: whatever is common belongs to nobody, and the apartments of my ſervants would be as ſtrange to me as the houſes of my neighbours. The Aſiatics, though very voluptuous, are all lodged in houſes ſimply furniſhed. They regard life as a journey, and their habitations as

inns. This conſideration weighs but little with wealthy Europeans, who furniſh out their houſes as if they were to live in them for ever; I have a different reaſon which would produce the ſame effect. It would ſeem to me, that the eſtabliſhing myſelf with ſo much parade in one place, would be in a manner to baniſh myſelf from every other, and to keep me a priſoner in my own palace. Is not the world itſelf a palace noble enough? and is it not at the ſervice of the wealthy whenever they pleaſe to enjoy it. *Ubi bene, ibi patria*; this is the rich man's motto. He is at home wherever money will paſs, and he can convey his ſtrong box. Wherefore then ſhould he circumſcribe himſelf by walls and gates, as if he were never to go out of them! Doth an epidemical diſeaſe, a war, or a rebellion drive me from one place, I go on to another and find my houſe arrived there before me. Why ſhould I take the trouble to build a houſe for myſelf, when there are houſes built for me in every part of the world? Why ſhould I, who am ſo eager to live, make ſo much preparation for the future enjoyment of what I may poſſeſs to day? It is impoſſible to make our lives agreeable by continually acting inconſiſtently with ourſelves. Empedocles thus reproached the Ægrigentines for their eager purſuit of pleaſures, as if they had not

not a day to live; and for building houſes and palaces, as if they ſhould never die.

Beſides, to what purpoſe ſhould I have ſo large an houſe, having ſo few people to inhabit it, and fewer things to put in it? My furniture ſhould be as ſimple as my taſte, I would have neither a gallery of pictures, nor a library; particularly if I loved reading and underſtood painting; as I ſhould then know that all ſuch collections muſt be imperfect, and that their deficiences would give us more chagrin than the having nothing of them at all. In this particular, it is well known that abundance occaſions want; a circumſtance that every maker of collections muſt have experienced. The real connoiſſeur therefore, ſhould never make ſuch collections: thoſe who know how to make uſe of a cabinet themſelves never keep one to ſhew to others.

Gaming is not a proper amuſement for a rich man; it is the reſource of thoſe who have nothing to do: and I ſhould be too much employed in my pleaſures to have time to throw away to ſo little purpoſe. As I am ſolitary and poor, I never play, except ſometimes at cheſs, and even that is too much; if I were rich, I ſhould play ſtill leſs, and then only for trifling ſums, that I might not ſee others diſſatisfied at loſing, or be

ſo myſelf. The intereſt we take in play, loſing its motive in a rich man, can never be converted into a paſſion unleſs in minds of a wrong or degenerate turn. The profits which may accrue to a rich man from play, are always leſs affecting than the loſſes he ſuſtains: he runs the riſk alſo on the whole to be rather a loſer than a gainer; ſo that no man who reaſons rightly, can become very fond of an amuſement, wherein the chances of every kind are againſt him. Whoever gratifies his vanity by the advantages of fortune, may employ thoſe advantages in objects much more pleaſing: nor are they leſs remarkable in the loweſt play than in the higheſt. A taſte for gaming is indeed the fruit of avarice and indolence, and is the product only of vacant minds; I imagine myſelf poſſeſſed, therefore, of ſentiment and knowledge enough to diſpenſe with ſuch a ſubſtitute. We ſeldom ſee thinking perſons very fond of play, which either ſuſpends that habit or gives it a turn to dry calculations: thus one uſe and perhaps the only one that is conſequent on a taſte for the ſciences, is that of checking in ſome degree this ſordid paſſion. Such perſons chuſe rather to be employed in proving the utility of play than in playing themſelves. For my part, I ſhould oppoſe it even among the gameſters, and ſhould have more pleaſure in

laughing

laughing at them when they loſt, than in winning their money.

I ſhould be the ſame in private life as in my commerce with the world, deſiring that my fortune ſhould contribute to make every one about me eaſy, and prevent a ſenſe of their inequality of condition. The glitter of dreſs, is, in many reſpects, inconvenient. To preſerve as much freedom as poſſible in thoſe I converſed with, I would always go dreſſed in ſuch a manner as to ſeem always in my place, in whatever rank of men I ſhould be engaged: and to be particularly diſtinguiſhed among none. I would ſo chuſe my garb that without affectation, or change of perſonage, I could paſs equally unnoticed in a club of common tradeſmen, or in an aſſembly of the beſt company. By this method, being maſter of my own conduct, I am within reach of the pleaſures and amuſements of every ſtation. It is ſaid there are ſome ladies who ſhut their doors againſt perſons plainly dreſſed, and admit nobody without lace; I would therefore ſpend my days elſewhere, but if thoſe ladies were young and pretty, I might ſometimes put on lace, to ſpend an evening, with them.

The only rules for the choice of company would with me, be mutual attachment, and

conformity of taſte and character; I ſhould indulge myſelf in the pleaſures of ſociety, alſo, as a man, but not as a rich one; I would never ſuffer them to be vitiated by the principles of intereſt. If my opulence ſhould have left me any humanity, my benevolence would be extenſive: but I would have a ſociety about my perſon and not a retinue; a company of friends and not dependents; I ſhould not chuſe to be the patron of my gueſts, but their hoſt. Independence and equality would give to my connections all the candour of benevolence, and where neither duty nor intereſt ſhould enter into conſideration, friendſhip and pleaſure only would be our law.

A man cannot purchaſe a friend or a miſtreſs. It is indeed eaſy enough to procure women for money; but this is not the way to acquire the love of any. So far is love from being bought or ſold, that money infallibly deſtroys it. Whoever pays, though he were the moſt amiable of men, cannot be long the object of affection, were it for no other reaſon than that he pays. It will not be long before he pays for ſome other, or rather another will be paid for with his money; by which double connection, formed by intereſt and debauchery, without love, without honor, and without true

pleaſure,

pleaſure, the faithleſs, mercenary and wretched woman, treated in the ſame manner by the favorite who receives, as ſhe herſelf treats the fool who beſtows, remains thus acquitted between both. It would doubtleſs be agreeable to be liberal towards a beloved object, if ſuch liberality were not liable to be converted into hire. I know but one way to indulge it, therefore, toward a miſtreſs, without putting an end to her affection; and that is to give her up every thing, and to depend afterwards on her bounty. It remains only to know where is the woman with whom ſuch a proceeding would not be extravagant.

The lover who pretended to enjoy Lais without her having any enjoyment of him, talks idly. That enjoyment which is not reciprocal is nothing; it is at moſt only the enjoyment of the ſex, but not of the individual. Now where the moral pleaſures of love do not exiſt, why ſhould ſuch a mighty affair be made of the reſt? Nothing is more eaſy to acquire than ſuch a brutal ſatisfaction, and a poor mule-driver hath more opportunities of being happy in this reſpect, than a monarch.

Oh! that one could but ſufficiently diſplay the inconſiſtency of vice, and ſhew, when it obtains what it wiſhed for, how much it is diſappointed! Whence can ariſe our cruel avidity

to

to corrupt innocence, to make a victim of a young object we ought to protect, and whom by that firſt ſtep we plunge into a gulph of miſery, from which death only can relieve her? Whence but from brutality, vanity, and folly? The pleaſure taken in it is not that of nature, but of prejudice: and that of the meaneſt of prejudices, as it ariſes from a contempt of ourſelves. He who is ſenſible of his being the moſt contemptible of mankind, is afraid of riſking a compariſon with others, and therefore would be the firſt, in order to be leſs odious. It is remarkable that perſons the moſt eager after this imaginary enjoyment, are never the moſt amiable or young; ſuch as are themſelves capable of giving delight, and who might be more excuſable for being nice and difficult. No, the man who hath the advantage of perſon, merit and ſenſibility, is not afraid of the experience of his miſtreſs; juſtly confident of himſelf, he ſays to her: "you are "not ignorant of pleaſure, but no matter; "my heart promiſes you ſuch as you have "never experienced."

But an old ſatyr, accuſtomed to debauchery, in every reſpect diſagreeable, both in perſon and manners, incapable as unworthy of pleaſing any woman who is acquainted with others, conceives he may make himſelf amiable to an

innocent

innocent girl, in profiting by her inexperience, and being the first to excite in her the emotions of nature. His only hope is to please by the circumstance of novelty; this is incontestibly the secret motive of this fantastical desire: but he is mistaken, the horror and disgust he excites, are no less natural than the emotions he attempts to raise. He is mistaken also even in his ridiculous attempts: the same nature takes care to vindicate her rights; every girl who sets herself to sale, is already given away; and having bestowed herself agreeable to her own choice, hath made the very comparison of which the dotard of a purchaser is afraid. He purchases therefore an imaginary pleasure, and is not held the less in abhorrence.

For my own part, whatever alteration wealth would make in me, there is one circumstance on which I should never change. Though I should possess neither virtue nor humanity, I should retain at least some taste, feeling, and delicacy, which would hinder me from exhausting my wealth, like a dupe, in hunting after chimeras, and from throwing away my money and time, in getting myself abused and laughed at by children. If I were young, I should pursue the pleasures of youth: and as I would enjoy them voluptuously, I should not pursue them in the manner of the wealthy. If I were rich and of the same age as I am, the

case

caſe would be different; I would prudently confine myſelf to pleaſures adapted to my years; I would cheriſh my taſte for thoſe I could ſtill enjoy, and ſuppreſs thoſe inclinations which would ſerve only to torment me. I would never ſubject my grey beard to the diſdainful railleries of young wenches: I could never bear to ſee my careſſes make them turn away with diſguſt, to give them occaſion to tell ridiculous ſtories at my expence, or to imagine them [deſcribing the fumbling efforts of the old ape, by way of avenging themſelves for having endured them. If, indeed, my ill-reſiſted habits ſhould at any time convert my ancient deſires into real wants, I might poſſibly ſatisfy them; but it would always be attended with ſhame and confuſion. The neceſſity ſhould not give riſe to a paſſion; I would get rid of it as well as I could, and there it ſhould end; I would no more make my weakneſs a matter of employment, nor have on any occaſion more than one witneſs to my folly. Human life affords other pleaſures when this is exhauſted; in our vain purſuit of thoſe that eſcape us, we deprive ourſelves therefore of thoſe which remain. Let us vary our taſte with our years, nor tranſpoſe the ages any more than the ſeaſons. We ſhould at all times be conſiſtent with ourſelves, and never counteract nature; ſuch vain efforts only wearing life out, and preventing our enjoyment of it.

The

The multitude, who lead active lives, are never weary of themſelves: if their amuſements are not much diverſified, they are taken but ſeldom; their long intervals of labour and fatigue give them a higher reliſh for the pleaſures of an holiday. As for the rich, their great misfortune is ſpleen and uneaſineſs: in the midſt of all their expenſive amuſements, ſurrounded as they are by numerous flatterers or attendants, all contributing to their pleaſure, they pine away their lives in diſcontent; the women, in particular, being at a loſs to employ or divert themſelves, are devoured by it, under the name of the vapours: which ſometimes degenerates into an horrible diſeaſe, depriving them not only of their reaſon, but their lives. For my own part, I know no ſituation in life ſo miſerable as that of a fine woman at Paris, except it be that of the agreeable coxcomb her follower; who, from the vanity of being thought ſucceſsful in his amours, ſupports the tedious length of the moſt melancholy days, that ever were paſſed by an human creature.

The mode, decorum and ceremony, which ariſe from luxury and politeneſs, confine the courſe of life within the moſt inſipid round of uniformity. The pleaſure, we are deſirous of appearing to enjoy in the ſight of others, is loſt

both

both to them and to ourſelves*. Men are never ſo ridiculous as when they act from eſtabliſhed forms; he who knows how to vary his ſituation and his amuſements, will efface to day the impreſſion he made yeſterday; he is looked upon as nobody perhaps by others: but he enjoys himſelf, being entire and independent in all times and places. My only ſettled mode ſhould be this: in every ſituation and circumſtance not to trouble myſelf about other people, and to employ every day by itſelf, as if it were independent on the preceding or following. As with the crowd, I ſhould be one of the crowd, ſo in the country I ſhould be always a ruſtic; and when I talked about huſbandry, the peaſants ſhould not laugh at me. I would not go to build a town in the fields; or require, in the corner of ſome diſtant country, to have a view of the Tuilleries from my apartment. On the

* Two ladies of faſhion, at Paris, in order to be thought fond of taking much amuſement, laid themſelves under a voluntary injunction of never going to bed till five o'clock in the morning. In the depth of winter, therefore, their ſervants were often kept waiting for them in the ſtreets; having enough to do to keep themſelves from freezing. On entering, however, one evening, or rather one morning, into the apartment where theſe two ladies, ſo fond of amuſement, paſſed away their hours without counting the clock, they were found, both together, without any other company, faſt aſleep, each in her eaſy chair, by the fire-ſide.

the ſide of a pleaſant hill, well ſhaded with trees, I would have a little white houſe with green window ſhutters, which I would make my rural habitation. To have it thatched with ſtraw, it would be beſt for all ſeaſons; I ſhould, however, magnificently prefer, not the cold and dull-looking ſlates, but tiles, becauſe they have a neater and livelier aſpect than thatch, and beſides that the houſes in my country are covered with nothing elſe, ſo that they would remind me a little of the happy days of my youth. The area before my door ſhould be full of poultry, and in the ſtabling ſhould be ranged proper ſtalls for my cows, as I am extremely fond of milk. My garden ſhould be calculated entirely for the uſe of the kitchen; and inſtead of a park, I would have a pretty orchard; the fruits of which ſhould be at the ſervice of every one who pleaſed to gather them. I would not ſo niggardly magnificent as to plant ſuperb eſpaliers, which every one would be afraid to touch. This petty prodigality, however, would not be very coſtly, becauſe the aſylum I ſhould make choice of, ſhould be ſituated in ſome diſtant province of plenty and poverty, where money is ſufficiently ſcarce and proviſions proportionably cheap.

There would I get together a company of friends, more ſelect than numerous, ſuch as loved

loved pleaſure and underſtood it: of women, who could riſe from the ſofa, to join in the amuſements of the country, and to take up ſometimes, inſtead of cards and counters, the hay-makers rake and the baſket of the fruit-gatherers. There ſhould all the affected airs of the town be laid aſide, while becoming real villagers, we ſhould find ſuch a numerous diverſity of amuſements, as would only ſerve to puzzle our choice in the evening, which to partake of the next day. Exerciſe and employment would thus give us new appetite and new taſtes: our meals would be all entertainments, and their plenty would pleaſe more than their delicacy. Chearfulneſs, ruſtic labour, and rural ſports are the beſt cooks in the world, and high-ſeaſoned ragouts appear very ridiculous to thoſe who begin their labor with the riſing ſun. My table ſhould be ſerved alſo with no more order than elegance; I would make every place occaſionally my dining room, ſitting down ſometimes to meals in the garden, ſometimes on board a boat, and at others under a ſpreading tree: at others again I would dine at a greater diſtance from my houſe, by the ſide of a clear ſpring, on the freſh graſs, under a tuft of alders and filberds; a joyous troop of gueſts bringing along, in chearful proceſſion the apparatus of the feaſt: the green

turf

turf ſhould ſerve us both for table and chairs, the borders of the fountain for a buffet, and the neighbouring trees ſhould furniſh the deſſert. Our viands ſhould be ſerved up without order, appetite eaſily diſpenſes with ceremony: while every one, profeſſing openly to love himſelf beſt, is not at all offended that each helps himſelf as ſoon as he can, and to what he moſt likes. From this cordial and moderate familiarity, would ariſe a pleaſant conteſt, equally free from rudeneſs and conſtraint; a hundred times more delightful and amicable than the affected forms of ceremony. We would have no impertinent footman watching our behaviour, criticiſing on our converſation, counting the morſels we put into our mouths, amuſing themſelves with making us wait for drink, and grumbling at our ſitting too long at dinner. We would be our own ſervants, in order to be our own maſters; each would be ſerved by all the reſt; the time would paſs away imperceptibly, our repaſt would afford us alſo repoſe and ſhould laſt as long as the burning heat of day. If any peaſant ſhould happen to paſs by, returning from his work, with the implements of his labour on his ſhoulder; I would chear his honeſt heart by a civil ſalutation, and a cup or two of generous wine. This condeſcenſion would make him ſupport his poverty more chearfully, and would

give

give me the ſatisfaction of perceiving myſelf ſtill actuated by the principles of humanity.

If at any time the country-people were aſſembled at their rural feſtivals, I would be one of the firſt to join them with my little company; if any marriage ſhould be ſolemnized, in my neighbourhood, as I ſhould be known to love mirth and rejoicing, I ſhould be invited to the wedding. On this occaſion, I ſhould make the good people ſome preſent, ſimple as their condition; and ſhould receive a return of ineſtimable value, little known to my equals, in frankneſs and true pleaſure. I would ſup with them chearfully at one end of their long table, join in the burthen of an old ruſtic ſong, and dance in their barn, with greater ſatisfaction than I ſhould at the politeſt aſſembly.

Hitherto, it may be ſaid, every thing goes on bravely; "But what would you do about hunting? Can you live in the country and not hunt?" I underſtand you, I have as yet only deſcribed a farm, and in that was certainly wrong. I ſuppoſed myſelf rich, I ſhould therefore, have pleaſures that are excluſive and deſtructive; this is quite another affair, I muſt have manors, woods, keepers, homage, incenſe and holy water.

Very

Very well; but theſe manors will have neighbours jealous of their privileges, and poſſibly deſirous of uſurping thoſe of others: our keepers may go to quarrelling, and perhaps their maſters too: hence will ariſe diſcontent, animoſities and lawſuits. Theſe things are not very agreeable. My tenants will not look on with pleaſure and ſee their corn deſtroyed by my hares or wild-boars. As they dare not kill them, they will of courſe drive them away; and thus, having ſpent their days in cultivating their lands, they will be obliged to ſpend the night in guarding them: they will have their drums, their horns, and their bells; this noiſe will of conſequence diſturb my ſleep. I ſhall dream of the wretchedneſs of theſe poor people, and ſhall not be able to help reproaching myſelf. Had I the honour, indeed to have been born a prince, all this would not affect me; but being only an upſtart of acquired wealth, I ſhould have an heart a little plebeian.

But this is not all; plenty of game would tempt thieves and encroachers; I ſhould ſoon have theſe to puniſh; I ſhould ſtand in need of priſons, goalers, and executioners; all which appears to me very cruel. The wives of the wretched culprits would beſiege my gates and importune me with their cries; or elſe I muſt have

have them driven away and ill-treated. On the other hand, the poor people, who were no poachers, and whoſe crops have been injured by the game, would come to make their complaints likewiſe: the one would be puniſhed for having deſtroyed the game, and the other ruined for having ſpared it; what a melancholy alternative! I ſhould ſee nothing on every ſide but objects of miſery; I ſhould hear nothing but ſighs and complaints: it appears to me that this would greatly diminiſh the pleaſure of ſacrificing hares and patridges at one's eaſe.

Would you diſengage your pleaſures from their attendant pains, take none that are excluſive; the more you make others partakers of them, the more pure and refined are they to yourſelf. I would fix my reſidence, therefore, in a country where every one ſhould be at liberty to ſhoot and hunt at pleaſure, and where I could have the amuſement without ſo much trouble. The game might not be here ſo plenty indeed, but more addreſs would be required to put it up, and it would afford more pleaſure in the chaſe. I ſhall ever remember the tranſports my father uſed to experience, on ſhooting the firſt partridge in the ſeaſon, and the joy he once felt on finding an hare, which he had been in ſearch of the whole day. Yes, I will maintain it that my father, though alone, with his dog and gun,

tired with fatigue, and his flesh torn with thorns and briars, used to return home at night, with his little prey, more contented with his day's sport, than all your hunters of quality, who mounted on good horses, and followed by attendants with a score of fowling-pieces, do nothing but fire, charge their pieces, and murder the game around them, without address, without honour, and almost without exercise. The pleasure therefore is equally great, and the inconvenience much less, where one has no manor to protect, no poacher to punish, nor poor people to torment. So that this is a good reason for preferring such a situation: for, do what you will, mankind are not to be continually oppressed with impunity; the constant curses of a neighbourhood rendering the game, purchased at that rate, sooner or later very dear.

Once more I repeat it, exclusive pleasures are destructive to all pleasure. Genuine amusements are those which we partake of in common with others: those we are desirous of enjoying alone, are no longer to be enjoyed. If the walls which I build round my park, form a dull and melancholy enclosure, I have only been at a great expence to deprive myself of the pleasure of a prospect, which I am obliged to seek

at a diſtance. The demon of property infects every thing he touches. A rich man is deſirous of poſſeſſing every thing, and conceives he ſhall be happy only where he is not; he is therefore conſtantly flying from himſelf. For my part, I ſhould act in this particular, were I rich, as I do being poor. At preſent I enjoy much more of the poſſeſſions of others than I ſhall ever do of my own; making myſelf maſter of every thing that pleaſes me in my neighbourhood; there is no conqueror more abſolute in this reſpect than I am; I even take the ſame liberty with the poſſeſſions of princes, and accommodate to my uſe every foot of land that lies open and pleaſes me, without diſtinction; I even give names to the ſeveral grounds and incloſures in my walks, calling the one my park, the other my terras, and look on myſelf as the maſter. I walk about them with impunity, I return often to maintain my poſſeſſion; and wear out the ſoil as much as I pleaſe with walking; and you will never be able to perſuade me, that the owner of the lands which I thus appropriate, makes any more uſe of the money they produce him, than I do of his eſtate. If at any time, my walks are interrupted by a hedge, a ditch, or other new incloſures it concerns me but little, as I caneaſily remove my park to ſome other ſpot; there is room enough in the adjacent

fields,

fields, and I may pillage my neighbours a long time, before I ſhall be at a loſs for an aſylum.

Thus have I given a ſpecimen of true taſte in the choice of agreeable amuſements, and of the ſpirit of their enjoyment; all the reſt is only illuſion, chimera, and ridiculous vanity. Whoever departs from theſe rules, however rich he may be, will only ſquander away his wealth, without ever knowing the value of life.

It will doubtleſs be objected to me that ſuch amuſements as I have been deſcribing are equally within the reach of all men, and that no one need be rich in order to enjoy them. This is preciſely the point I have been aiming it. True pleaſure is always in our power, if we will enjoy it; it is prejudice alone that makes every thing difficult, and drives happineſs from us; it being an hundred times eaſier to be happy than to appear ſo to others. The man of taſte and real voluptuary, hath nothing to do with wealth; it is ſufficient for him to be free and independent. Whoſoever enjoys health and the neceſſaries of life, let him but caſt aſide the imaginary conveniences of opinion, and he is rich enough: this is the *aurea mediocritas* of Horace. Look out therefore, ye poſſeſſors of ſtrong coffers, for ſome other employment for your wealth; it is uſeleſs

to

to the purchaſe of pleaſure. Emilius doth not know this better than I do; but, having a leſs corrupted heart he will be more feelingly ſenſible of it, and all the obſervations he will make in the world, will only ſerve to confirm him in it.

In thus ſpending our time, we are ſtill conſtantly in ſearch of Sophia, but as yet cannot find her. It was of conſequence that ſhe ſhould not be found ſo ſoon, and therefore we have been looking for her where I was very ſure ſhe was not to be found.

At length, however, it is time to look for her in good earneſt, leſt my youth ſhould find one he miſtakes for her, and ſhould diſcover his error too late. Farewell then to Paris, the city of noiſe, ſmoke and dirt, where the women are become deſtitute of honour, and the men of virtue. Paris, adieu! we are in ſearch of love, happineſs and innocence; we can never, therefore, be too far from thy walls.

END *of the* THIRD VOLUME.